

A Culture of Success Cortland Downtown Revitalization Initiative

A P P L I C A T I O N



I would like to express my gratitude to Governor Cuomo for establishing the Regional Economic Development Councils, and for proceeding with Round 2 of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The application process has given the City of Cortland the opportunity to engage many members of our community in enhancing our vision. Property owners, local residents, and interested community members took time to weigh in on the application. It also gave us an increase in the level of interest of necessary partners to advance the goals for our downtown.

Like many municipalities, Cortland's downtown is the heart of not only the City, but our community as a whole. It is a gathering place for our residents, and it is extremely walkable from anywhere in the City. Over time, the types of businesses and the attractions for downtowns have changed; and Cortland has changed with the times. We have invested time and effort into planning, to help guide developers and property owners in the right direction to continue our growth. Our efforts have placed downtown Cortland on the verge of great success.

Private sector investors, with some assistance from the City, have completed many downtown projects in recent years, and we are anticipating several more that will come to fruition in the very near future. I trust that the Regional Economic Development Council will recognize the groundwork that has been laid for Cortland's downtown, and see that the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will result in lasting measurable impacts in the downtown, the City, and Region beyond.

On behalf of the residents of the City of Cortland and our surrounding communities, I am honored to submit this application for Governor Cuomo's Downtown Revitalization Initiative. With additional support from the State of New York, Cortland will continue to be a great place to call home. Thank you for your consideration of this submission.

Very truly yours,

Brian Tobin

Mayor, City of Cortland

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Acknowledgements

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Kerby Thompson, Producing Artistic Director, Cortland Repertory Theater

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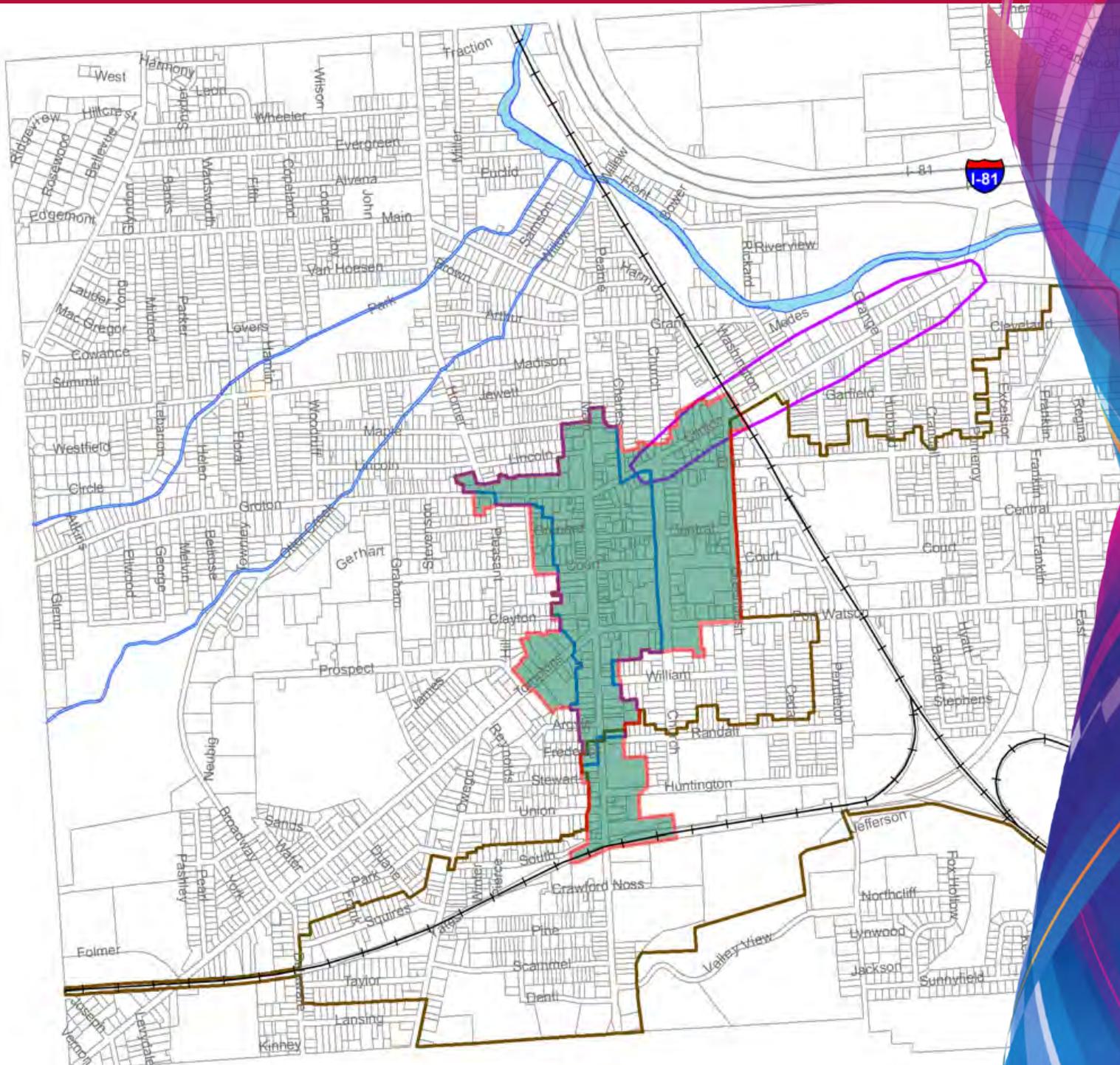
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Cortland DRI Location Map



Legend

-  Cortland Downtown Revitalization Initiative
-  Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA)
-  Central Business Zoning District
-  Clinton Ave Gateway

Basic Information

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

Municipality Name: City of Cortland

Downtown Name: Historic Downtown Cortland

County: Cortland

Vision for the Downtown

The City of Cortland and its many partners are united in their vision of a Downtown that thrives as the economic and cultural center of Cortland County; an energetic, attractive, and inviting place for commerce, residence, and recreation. The vision is built upon a realistic analysis of the downtown economy, current job growth trends, and inherent strengths and opportunities. The foundation is solid, and we will be bold and creative as we build upon that foundation to meet our goals.

Three strategies will guide our efforts:

- We will embrace and expand the creative economy;
- We will build a complete downtown neighborhood; and
- We will re-imagine infrastructure for the 21st Century.

Justification - Provide an overview of the downtown, highlighting the area's defining characteristics and the reasons for its selection. Explain why the Downtown is ready for DRI investment and how that investment would serve as a catalyst to bring about revitalization.

The City of Cortland, New York State's "Crown City," began as a thriving, successful destination for both manufacturers and settlers. It soon grew into a manufacturing powerhouse that gave rise to a bustling downtown. The vestiges of those times are still found in the number of architectural assets across the central business district, and they serve both as a reminder of downtown's vibrant past and as a foundation upon which to build the City's re-emerging economy. Downtown Cortland has been resilient in the face of difficult economic times across Upstate New York, and its leaders have persisted in the work to return downtown Cortland to its rightful place as the core of the county economy. Illustrative of this effort, the City undertook the development and implementation of its first truly collaborative Comprehensive Plan, adopted in early 2012. The plan's guiding development document states:

"Cortland is at a crossroads. The blue collar manufacturing community that Cortland once was is largely gone. The City must fundamentally redefine and reinvent itself in order to reverse the decline of recent decades and remain a viable community in the future. The structure of the national economy has changed, and Cortland must change with it. The rust-belt mindset must be set aside, and a new economy developed in order to compete on the regional, statewide, and national levels: one based on the College, education, arts, culture, recreation, tourism, high-tech and green jobs, and other emerging trends. Strong neighborhoods, a vibrant downtown, and a high quality of life must be fostered in order to support new economic opportunities and to create the sense of place and community that is needed to compete in today's world."



This plan, and the actions undertaken to implement it, have created a culture of success in Cortland. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative is an ideal and timely fit for Cortland as it is now poised to capitalize on these successes. Much as Chester Wickwire invented new ways to weave wire screens and launched Cortland's economy at the turn of the 20th Century, community leaders are weaving together the strands of a new economy for the 21st Century.... and a vibrant, exciting, fun, and interesting downtown is the bedrock of this new community.

Downtown Cortland meets or exceeds every criteria outlined in the Downtown Revitalization Initiative application and guidance documents, and is ready for DRI investment. Specifically, as summarized here and explained in greater detail throughout our application:

- 1** The DRI area is concentrated and compact, with well-defined boundaries. It includes the City's Central Business District at its core with dense residential development at the periphery.
- 2** Cortland's catchment area is large enough to support a vibrant year-round downtown. The city's population density is second only to Syracuse in Central New York and is the only city in the region to show a population increase between the 2000 and 2010 Census.
- 3** More than \$535 million of investment has occurred within a five-mile radius of downtown Cortland within the past ten years, with an additional \$22 million being invested downtown at this time. With more than four acres of land, 200,000 square-feet of space to support new development, and clear strategies to foster that investment, Cortland is poised to capitalize on those investments and make great strides in the next several years.
- 4** Downtown jobs continue to grow. Approximately 300 new jobs have been created there in recent years. This does not include the 100 to 150 new professional jobs that will be created at McNeil Insurance, which is undertaking a multi-million dollar expansion in downtown Cortland. It is anticipated that approximately 500 new jobs will be created in or near downtown Cortland in the immediately foreseeable future.
- 5** The Cortland Downtown and the greater Cortland area possess the amenities and sense of place to be a truly livable community and to compete in today's world. The City is physically beautiful with an extensive collection of historic architecture. It offers lifestyle choices that meet the desires and needs of young and old from all walks of life. It is connected both digitally and physically, and provides a sustainable, walkable, entertaining community for all.

6 The City of Cortland has built a policy structure that has, and will, continue to provide a conduit to increased livability and quality of life. The Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2012, new sustainable-oriented zoning is being adopted in 2017, a Pedestrian/Bike Plan has been completed, and the City has continued to follow the Smart Growth principles that made it a Climate Smart Community.

7 The City has conducted an open community engagement process that has resulted in a unified vision for downtown, and the development of this application was guided and informed by a steering committee of stakeholders including local leadership, the business community, not-for-profits, and residents.

8 Cortland is ready to go, right now. We have done our homework, analyzed our market, created plans, and partnered with the private sector to foster development projects. Plans are neither meek nor mundane. We are going to Build the Creative Economy, Create a Complete Downtown Neighborhood, and Develop 21st Century Infrastructure. Dozens of new housing units will be created; a new LEED certified hotel will be built; We will create the fastest WIFI and generate the greatest percent of energy from renewable resources, of any community in New York State; New, unique public spaces will reflect our creative soul; and new performance venues will provide a space for our talented musicians to fill with sound. We believe that no other community is as ready as Cortland, and that the community's vision will create a vibrant downtown unlike any other in the region; and

9 The community is prepared with an experienced team, private developers ready to invest, and a track record of turning its visions into reality. The City has administered many grants over the years, often concurrently. This includes Community Development Block Grants, New York Main Street grants, RESTORE NY grants, HOME Grants, Affordable Housing Corporation grants, State Archives grants, Environmental Protection Fund grants, Urban and Community Forestry grants, LWRP, TAP, and others. The City's successful administration of the prior listed programs demonstrates that it is well positioned to maximize the impact of the DRI funding once the City is nominated.

The DRI will transform the Downtown area into a thriving regional center of growth, and by extension, will bolster economic development efforts throughout Cortland County. Cortland is building a new community, and a new economy, for the 21st Century, and we invite New York State to join us for the journey.

We encourage readers to visit www.cortland.org/ success to learn more about Cortland's exciting plans and initiatives and to download copies of referenced documents.

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 concentrated 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. Attach a map that clearly delineates the downtown neighborhood.

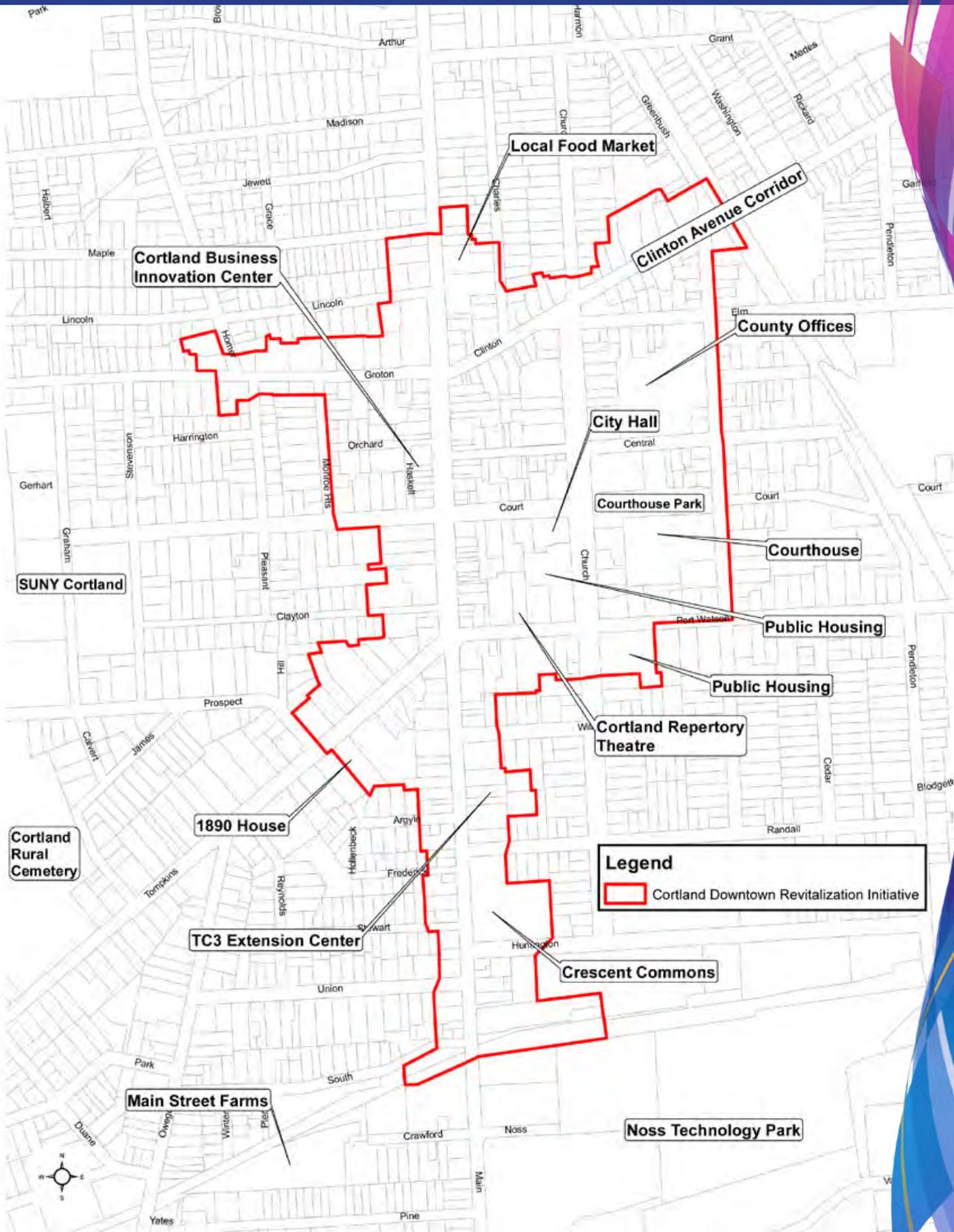
The downtown Cortland DRI area is concentrated with well-defined boundaries.

- ✓ ***The DRI area includes the City's lively Central Business District at its core with dense residential development at the periphery.***
- ✓ ***Its northern boundary ties into the Clinton Avenue Gateway Corridor from interstate 81.***
- ✓ ***Its southern boundary ties into the City's Brownfield Opportunity Area, capitalizing on a partnership with the NYS Department of State.***

At the core of Cortland's selected DRI area is the central business district, defined almost exclusively by commercial and residential mixed-use attached buildings. The north, east, and west boundaries of the downtown are all defined by high-density multifamily and single-family residential development, and to the south, a spur line of the New York Susquehanna and Western Railway, which runs through the city's industrial districts, visibly defines the downtown boundary.

The City of Cortland meticulously, and with calculated effort, selected the above-described boundaries to define its downtown and to connect the Central Business District to other critical areas of the city. Specifically, at its northeastern boundary, the downtown ties into the "Clinton Avenue Gateway," where thousands of daily visitors and guests from I-81 are welcomed into the community. The city has carefully planned this gateway corridor for future development and enhancement as outlined in the Northeast Gateway and Clinton Avenue Corridor Enhancement Initiative ("Gateway Initiative" discussed below). At the southern end and eastern boundary, the downtown area overlaps with an important portion of the city's Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA), which is currently under study to advance a redevelopment strategy for historic industrial neighborhoods. The BOA project is funded jointly by the City of Cortland in partnership with the New York State Department of State. Finally, the downtown area covers a large percentage of the city's historic district along Main Street and toward the east along the Tompkins Street gateway.

Cortland DRI Location Area



Downtown Revitalization Initiative: Boundaries of the Downtown Neighborhood



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.

Downtown and its catchment area can support a vibrant year-round downtown.

- ✓ ***The City of Cortland is the only city in the Central New York Region to show a population increase between the 2000 and 2010 Census.***
- ✓ ***Cortland is the most densely populated city in the Central New York Region outside of Syracuse;***
- ✓ ***Downtown Cortland is the only urbanized downtown for the 50,000 residents of Cortland County; and***
- ✓ ***Downtown Cortland is the primary downtown for nearly 10,000 students attending SUNY Cortland and Tompkins Cortland Community College.***

Home to 19,000 residents, the City is centrally located on Interstate 81, in the “technology triangle” between Syracuse (Syracuse University); Binghamton (Binghamton University); and Ithaca (Cornell University). The City of Cortland is the southern gateway to the Central New York Region and Eastern Gateway to the Finger Lakes, a magnet for hundreds of thousands of tourists annually. Additionally, Downtown Cortland is perfectly positioned to host visitors and travelers and is the only urbanized downtown for the 50,000 residents of Cortland County. Nearly 450 businesses occupy a half-mile radius from the center of Cortland’s Downtown, employing approximately 5,100 persons, making the downtown the largest employer in the County.

Furthermore, as of the most recent census, the City of Cortland is experiencing population growth and a declining poverty rate. Specifically, the city has seen its population increase by over 2.5 percent, between 2000 and 2010. At the same time, its poverty rate has decreased by 3.5 percent in recent years – a testament to the efforts of local leadership and the City’s recognized potential. Outside of the City of Syracuse, the City of Cortland is the most densely populated city in the Central New York Region.



Unlike many communities, downtown Cortland is adjacent to and within walking distance of the vibrant student body at SUNY Cortland. Downtown is a primary destination for approximately 7,000 enrolled students and 1,100 faculty and staff members at SUNY Cortland. In addition, located in the Southern entrance of the downtown, is Tompkins Cortland Community College's (TC3) downtown campus, which is supported by the main campus a short 15-minute drive from Cortland. TC3 enrolls approximately 2,400 students annually. Cortland's downtown and its array of commercial establishments, public spaces, and community events provides a unique venue for positive interaction of students, faculty, and residents. The colleges and the downtown environment have contributed to the creation of a youthful, exuberant, and attractive downtown for lifelong residents, students, young professionals, and visitors from near and far.

Cortland's urban core offers city residents, the college population, and visitors numerous amenities, which include but are not limited to, market rate housing; downtown, off-campus student housing; arts and entertainment at the new downtown state-of-the-art Cortland Repertory Theater; access to healthy food options at the new 7,000 square foot Local Food Market, year round locally produced foods at Main Street Farms; seasonal sales at the Main Street Farmers Market; and a lively restaurant and nightlife scene on Main Street. A testament to the City's growth and increasing population, the downtown's catchment area has demonstrated the ability to support a vibrant, year-round downtown.



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Past Investments & Future Investment



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.

- ✓ **Over \$535 million in new investment has occurred within a five-mile radius of Downtown over the past ten years.**
- ✓ **\$22 million in additional investment is underway or slated to start within six months.**
- ✓ **City efforts capitalize on regional plans, including REDC Strategic Plan, URI Plans, and Climate Change Plans.**
- ✓ **Downtown has more than 200,000 square-feet of available building space to accommodate new housing and business and four acres of City-owned land available for development.**
- ✓ **SUNY Cortland, the 1890 House, the Cortland Repertory Theater, Cortland Arts Connection, Cortland Cultural Council and other institutions are a foundation of Downtown's future growth.**
- ✓ **City government has forged strong working relationships with the non-profit Cortland Downtown Partnership, SUNY Cortland, Tompkins Cortland Community Collage, Cortland County IDA, Cortland County Chamber of Commerce, Cortland Regional Sports Council, Cortland Repertory Theater, Cortland Community Action Program, and others to maximize Downtown's potential.**
- ✓ **A range of high-quality infrastructure is available throughout the Downtown, including updated water and sewer systems, fiber-optic infrastructure, and nearby I-81 and rail.**
- ✓ **Cortland is adopting new Cleaner-Greener, LEED ND zoning that espouses Smart Growth principles.**
- ✓ **Cortland is a Climate Smart Community and has adopted a Climate Change Action Plan. Sustainability and energy-efficiency is at the forefront of all City initiatives.**
- ✓ **Cortland has a rich arts and cultural scene, including the Cortland Repertory Theater, the 1890 House Museum, the Main Street Music Series, the Cortland Cultural Council, the Cortland Arts Connection, and SUNY Cortland's Dowd Gallery and Arts Department.**



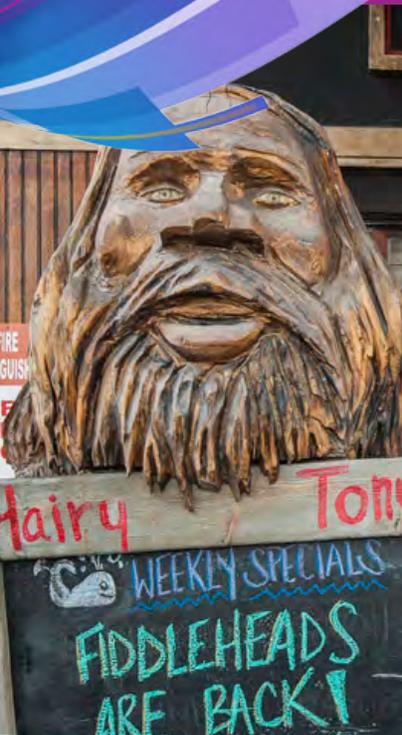
Cortland is poised to accelerate the successes achieved over the last decade into greater economic success, with the resurgence of Downtown at the center of this success. Commitment to the cultivation of strong public and private partnerships resulted in significant strides in revitalizing Cortland County's commercial and cultural center. In the past ten years, at least \$535 million in investment has occurred within a five-mile radius of Downtown, including \$25 million in and around the Downtown, over \$50 million in industrial development, and \$450 million in institutional investment at SUNY Cortland and Cortland Regional Medical Center. Most importantly, more than \$30 million in new private development is currently underway or expected to begin construction within the next six months, a testament to Cortland's attractiveness to new development.

Cortland has reached a pivotal period at a fortuitous moment as opportunity meets need. A \$10 million dollar investment through the DRI will complete Cortland's transformation into a 21st Century live, work, and play, urban center that will drive regional economic activity.

The City of Cortland and its partners have worked jointly to stimulate development in and around the Downtown, to build the foundation for future investment, and to elevate Downtown Cortland into the top tier of Downtowns in New York State. While the City's successes and opportunities are too voluminous to detail individually, below is a summary of Local and Regional Plans, Recent Investments, Future Development Opportunities, and Redevelopment Strategies designed to build on existing strengths and maximize future development.



Local and Regional Plans



Downtown Economic Market Analysis - The City believes that its Downtown revitalization efforts must be based on economic reality and objective data. Therefore, in 2016, the City commissioned Kennedy Smith of the Clue Group to complete an Economic Market Analysis. Ms. Smith is the longest tenured Director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center, and is one of the Nation's pre-eminent experts on downtown economies. The Plan establishes a framework for growth based on objective economic data. This Downtown Economic Market Analysis documents existing economic conditions, demographic and economic trends; identifies the market area and target markets; details customer profiles and preferences; projects future trends; estimates current market supply and prospective market demand; determines the district's share of the demand gap; and identifies opportunities for economic growth.

Brownfield Opportunity Area – The City of Cortland is currently undertaking a Step 2 Brownfield Opportunity Area project for a large swath of the southern and eastern portions of the City (The Southeast Cortland Redevelopment Initiative), adjacent to the Downtown area. The planning process will identify key development sites, and create detailed redevelopment options in order to place them back into active use. The BOA will allow the City to take full advantage of its development opportunities, and continue to create new jobs while improving surrounding neighborhoods. Implementing the BOA concurrently with the DRI will propel the community's transformation forward.

Central New York REDC Strategic Plan and URI Plan – The Central New York Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) clearly articulated its vision for the Central New York Region in the REDC Five-Year Strategic Plan and the Upstate Revitalization Initiative submission: CNY Rising. There are a number of priority goals and development investment strategies identified in the URI and Strategic Plan which dovetail well with past, present, and future plans, projects, and initiatives for the City of Cortland's downtown. These regional priority goals and strategic investment strategies include, but are not limited to, strengthening industry concentration in agribusiness, food processing, and agricultural programming to meet the growing demand for safe and high quality food and nutrition; investment in and support of destination tourism assets; investment in a competitive ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship by encouraging new venture development and improving access to seed capital; and investment to build welcoming world-class downtowns and communities through adaptive reuse of historic, underutilized, and vacant downtown structures and Brownfield remediation.

As detailed in the questions below, the City of Cortland has vigorously supported and expects to further these strategies and initiatives through recent, present, and future projects and initiatives. In harmony with the region's URI and Strategic Plan, Cortland has recently taken significant strides to advance agribusiness and access to high quality, nutritious foods. Specifically, with grant assistance from the City, Downtown has seen the emergence of The Local Food Market and Main Street Farms. Main Street Farms and The Local Food Market are located on opposite ends of the Downtown and both specialize in providing access to healthy, nutritious foods to the downtown and City residents. The Local Food Market is an organic health food store providing fresh and prepared foods. Main Street Farms, which grows food year-round in the City, offers CSA pickup locations in Binghamton, Cortland, Dewitt, Elbridge, Fairmount, Fayetteville, Homer, Liverpool, Onondaga Hill, and at various locations in Syracuse, making Main Street Farms a true regional agribusiness. It is also hoping to expand its year-round, interior agriculture, which is a major component of the Central New York Upstate Revitalization Initiative Plan.

The City and the Downtown have also formed public-private partnerships to support the regional destination tourism industry. In particular, the City of Cortland, the Cortland Downtown Partnership, and Downtown business owners have partnered with Central New York's largest ski resort, Greek Peak Mountain Resort, to promote the "Ski Cortland" initiative. Ski Cortland has leveraged Market New York funds to attract private investment for "brick and mortar" projects at the ski resort and a regional marketing program to draw recreational tourists from Pennsylvania and New Jersey to downtown Cortland and the mountain resort.

Furthering the URI and Strategic Plan for the Region, the City has also taken steps to encourage entrepreneurship and access to seed capital. Through a partnership with SUNY Cortland and the Cortland Downtown Partnership, the City has seen the recent development of the SUNY Cortland Entrepreneurship Program and the Cortland Business Innovation Center. Together, the programs provide affordable workspace, mentoring and support for young college students and local aspiring entrepreneurs in developing the skills and strategies required to launch business ventures ideally targeted at the Downtown. The City has also taken advantage of the state-funded Microenterprise Program to provide capital to startup or expanding small businesses in and around the downtown.

Over the last decade, to create a more welcoming downtown, Cortland has invested heavily in the redevelopment of its downtown buildings and infrastructure. The City is currently leveraging public grant funds to attract millions of dollars of private investment to historic structures in the downtown through the New York Main Street program that is administered through the New York State Office of Community Renewal.

A thorough discussion of the specific initiatives and projects spearheaded by the City of Cortland, nearly all of which advance the directives and strategies of the URI and regional Strategic Plan, can be found below, including past investments, future investment potential, and redevelopment strategies and opportunities.

Recent Investments

Cortland, like most Upstate New York cities, had suffered from long-term stagnation and decline. As the region struggled, so did the City and its downtown. But Cortland's story is one of perseverance and persistence. The City has successfully leveraged available resources to address its needs, and has positioned itself for success. As a result of coordinated and concerted efforts from a variety of public and private partners, the City is now on the cusp of reclaiming its past vibrancy while boldly creating a "new community for the 21st Century". The Downtown is at the core of these efforts.

Physically attractive, and economically growing, Downtown Cortland today is the center of commerce, culture, entertainment and government for all of Cortland County. This energy is not an accident, but the direct result of focused efforts to revitalize the Downtown as the centerpiece of a strong community with a high quality of life. Fiscal resources have been, and are being, invested into the Downtown and surrounding City for projects ranging from a few thousand to millions of dollars. While too numerous to name them all, examples of some of these recent investments that have led to this success include:

McNeil & Company - McNeil & Co., headquartered in the Downtown, has become a nationwide leader in specialized risk management and insurance. Operating in 49 states, McNeil employs more than 125 people in Cortland. Employees at McNeil earn highly competitive wages and bring a youthful demographic to the downtown landscape. This growing company, with assistance from a 2015 Empire State Development grant, and in partnership with McNeil Development, has committed to reinvest in Downtown Cortland rather than relocate out of state. They are currently completing a \$7.2 million expansion that will renovate 65,000 square-feet in several Downtown buildings to create a campus to accommodate their growth and appeal to new talent. Over 100 new professional employees are expected to be hired at McNeil Insurance over the next several years. The new hires from this development alone are anticipated to create a demand for 75 to 100 new housing units in the community, many of which can be developed in the Downtown.

The DRI will allow the City to build upon and fully leverage this investment by creating the exciting downtown neighborhood that young professionals employed at this, and other, companies expect. A letter from McNeil and Company is attached.



Crescent Commons – The former Crescent Corset Building is one of the last remaining vestiges of Cortland’s past dominance in the manufacture of women’s clothes. This 144,000 square-foot, three story former factory has only been partially used in recent decades. Located on “South” Main Street at the southern edge of Downtown, it is now undergoing a multimillion dollar adaptive reuse. The plan calls for a \$19 million mixed-use development, including 43,000 square-feet of offices and 47 market rate, loft style apartments. This is the largest project of its kind in the City’s recent history, and will significantly improve market rate rental options, allowing the Downtown to better compete for new residents and businesses. This project will provide needed housing for the McNeil and Company expansion.



New York Main Street Programs– The attached, multi-story commercial blocks that line Downtown’s streets, most of which are over 100 years old, provide the Downtown with a sense of place that cannot be replicated. The City is fortunate to have escaped many of the ravages of urban renewal and it’s largely “intact” Downtown has led to its being listed as a National Register Historic District. The City and the Cortland Downtown Partnership have captured four New York Main Street grants to renovate and restore these buildings. By partnering with property owners, several million in private funds have been leveraged to renovate over 20 buildings. The most recent grant, awarded in the 2015 CFA round, is expected to renovate up to six more buildings with significant private investment.

Local Food Market – This 7,000 square-foot market is a downtown supermarket (www.thelocalfoodmarket.com) that opened in the Downtown in 2015, aided by a substantial community development loan from the City of Cortland. In 2015, the Whole Heart Café, located within the Market, opened with assistance from the City’s Microenterprise Program. The store receives its produce, in part, from Main Street Farms, an urban farm located less than a mile from the store. This is the first food store, other than convenience stores, to be established in the City in many years, and is key to the continued growth of Downtown as a residential neighborhood. The business success has led to expansion that now includes three regional grocery stores serving the Homer and Tully communities as well. As detailed in Question 8, the Market is hoping to expand its Cortland location, adding greenhouses to produce healthy foods year round.



Cortland Business Innovation Center – Currently, the Cortland Downtown Partnership is in the final stages of rehabilitating 40-42 Main Street in the heart of the Downtown to serve as the Cortland Business Innovation Center. This Center began operation in 2015, even as building renovations continue. Funding of the initiative started in 2008 with a \$300,000 grant through the Dormitory Authority that allowed the Cortland Downtown Partnership to purchase the property and make essential improvements to the electrical and heating systems of the building in 2012. Additional brick and mortar funding of \$40,000 built out the initial incubation wing in 2012 through New York Main Street funding and \$650,000 in Regional Economic Council support in 2013 has added an elevator making the building ADA accessible. Another \$600,000 in renovations is currently underway to complete the renovations and make the building fully operational. Construction is anticipated to be completed in early 2017. The Innovation Center will help to spur, coordinate, and support business development in the Downtown.

2 Main Street – One of the most prominent buildings on Main Street, this four-story structure was nearly vacant when purchased by a developer in 2013. Enticed by the City, County, and School District adoption of the 421m Tax Abatement program for mixed-use buildings, the vacant upper floors were completely renovated to accommodate 14 new market rate apartments. There was a waiting list for these apartments before construction was completed, testament to the strong demand for downtown housing. The building is now undergoing an exterior restoration, including a five-color paint scheme befitting its location and architectural style.

Bank Block – The two historic buildings on the corner of Court and Main Street (the core of the Downtown) known as the Bank Block, were devastated by a fire in 2005, displacing at least three businesses and many residents. Vacant, deteriorating, and blighted for many years thereafter, the City secured New York

Main Street funding to assist the current owner to begin redevelopment. With Phase 1 stabilization and façade renovations completed in 2015, the developer secured ESD funding for a \$1 million+ upper floor redevelopment to create eight new market rate living units. Construction is now underway.

Clocktower Building – Tragedy struck the Downtown again in 2006 as the Clocktower Building, the most prominent and most architecturally significant structure in the Downtown, was destroyed by fire, leaving a vacant gap in the fabric of Main Street. While oftentimes sites such as these remain forever vacant, the City secured a \$2M Restore NY grant to stimulate a \$5M redevelopment, and today a new, three-story landmark structure, resembling the original now stands. The City's commitment to rebuilding this iconic structure, in the midst of the greatest economic downturn since the Great Depression, is testament to the community's perseverance and determination in maintaining its strong heritage and culture.

Bailey Place Insurance – This local insurance company has been a mainstay in the community for 125 years, long before its current home in one of the City's most "recognizable" buildings...a notorious blue roofed, late 20th Century structure that is incompatible with the historic Downtown. Several years ago, a young entrepreneur purchased the company he worked for and began ambitious expansion plans. Several other area companies were bought out, and the local workforce increased. To date, more than \$1 million has been spent on interior renovations to bring the building to current standards. The owner is now beginning a \$250,000+ exterior renovation to bring the building into conformance with the surrounding historic architecture. The improvements to this building have allowed it to attract a new high-end fitness center that will be investing upwards of \$600,000 in late 2017.





Cortland Repertory Theatre – Cortland Repertory Theatre (CRT) has provided summer stock theater for 45 years at its home at the Little York Lake Pavilion in Preble. In 2013 the Theater company purchased a vacant and run-down bowling alley in the Downtown and secured NYMS and RARP funding through the Cortland Downtown Partnership’s grant writing efforts and leveraged contributions from its community capital campaign to renovate it into a year round center for the performing arts. CRT’s downtown location is an art anchor facility for downtown performances, youth programming, office, set building, and storage. This development prompted the City to undertake a \$600,000 project to redesign and expand adjacent public parking to be more suitable to the Theater’s needs. 38 Arts – The success of their Downtown Cortland location has prompted CRT to begin planning for the next phase, a unique live-work facility located at 38 Main Street that will cater to the performing arts of all types. In addition to live theater, CRT hopes to expand the impact of its theatrical performances and build upon the City’s musical heritage by developing an innovative affordable living facility for actors, musicians, dancers, and technical professionals. This facility will include rehearsal space, as well as short and long-term housing to meet artists needs. This Performing Arts Live-Work Center, known as 38-Arts will draw even more performing artists in the community and strengthen Cortland’s role as an artistic and cultural center.



Housing – Despite successes with revitalizing the Downtown, the fact remains that more than 20 percent of all City residents live in poverty. The City believes that it must ensure that all residents, regardless of income, have an opportunity for success, and that starts with a decent, safe, affordable home in which to live. The City has regularly accessed HOME, CDBG, and AHC funding to renovate owner occupied and income properties in the City and to provide homeownership opportunities. In 2008 the City partnered with Housing Visions, Inc., a non-profit, Syracuse-based housing developer, to undertake a major housing project on “South” Main Street that substantially renovated or rebuilt affordable housing units at a total cost of \$8.5 million. The City worked with the developer to package numerous funding sources for this undertaking, and provided \$318,500 in Community Development funds to ensure its success. Not only did the project create quality affordable housing, it dramatically transformed “South” Main Street, previously considered one of most distressed in the area. The project is yet another example of the City’s experience in partnering with the private sector to undertake complicated development projects to address problems. In addition to this project, Downtown is home to two public housing developments, providing housing for all income levels. The City has also leveraged millions of dollars in federal and State funding to renovate and upgrade the housing throughout the City, and to incentivize homeownership. The City is now launching a locally funded program to incentivize the renovation of moderate income housing via seed grants to reduce the growth of “zombie properties” in the community. The creation of new, market rate rental units in the Downtown will strengthen the “weak link” in the City’s housing market.



SUNY Cortland – The City and the College are inextricably linked and enjoy a mutually beneficial relationship. Located immediately adjacent to the College, Downtown serves as a location for student and faculty to live and play. In recent years, the College has seen significant investment in its campus, including a state of the art Student Life Center. Within the past 10 years, \$432 million in capital improvements have been invested on campus, less than a mile from Downtown. Nearly \$260 million has been invested in just the past five years.

Municipal Investment Commitment –

The City of Cortland has a long commitment to its downtown as evidenced throughout this application. City government sees a strong, dynamic downtown as the cornerstone of community-wide economic success. They were a major part in the drive to create the Cortland Downtown Partnership, including the hiring of a full-time Downtown Manager. The City provides \$48,000 in financial support to the Partnership annually and an additional \$20,000 for landscaping and maintenance. The Partnership has allowed City leadership to increasingly focus on Downtown's future rather than addressing issues in a reactionary manner, as is often the case with less formal downtown organizational structures. In building upon the urban core's strengths as the center of commercial and cultural activities in Cortland County, the district is becoming one of the most desirable neighborhoods to not only work or visit but also to live.

In addition the creation and support of the Partnership, the City has sponsored a series of planning efforts to better guide downtown redevelopment, including a Downtown Strategic Plan, Clinton Avenue Gateway Enhancement Initiative, Downtown Economic Market Analysis, Two-Way Main Street Traffic Analysis, and a Redevelopment Opportunities Master Plan. It has also sponsored numerous funding applications to implement these plans, including numerous NYMS grant programs that have leveraged hundreds of thousands in private investment.

Industrial Development – In addition to governmental, institutional, and private development in and adjacent to Downtown, the greater Cortland Community has been successful in attracting larger scale industrial development projects, including, but not limited to:

Byrne Dairy Yoghurt Plant and Bryne Dairy Farms – A \$45 million investment to construct a new yoghurt processing plant in adjacent Cortlandville. This is one of the largest industrial development projects in the community in recent years and is expected to continue to expand in upcoming years.

Jenlor – A \$15 million project that will include the repurposing of the former Buckbee Mears industrial site in the City's south end into a wood pellet manufacturing facility.

Other impactful industrial investments recently have come at Pall Corp, Forkey Construction, Pyrotek, Essex Steel, KIK Custom Products, Suit Kote Corp., NYS&W Railroad and Natrium Products.

Infrastructure – In order to support the growth of the Downtown, appropriate municipal infrastructure must be present. The Downtown area is well-served by public infrastructure, including water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewers, that are suitable to meet the demands placed upon it. One limiting factor to downtown development is often a lack of sufficient public water pressure to support upper floor sprinklers. Without sprinklers, upper floor development can be limited. Sufficiently sized mains and a well maintained system in Cortland provides adequate water pressure to meet sprinkler needs throughout the Downtown and any potential new development. In some cases, however, individual water laterals need to be up-sized.

As detailed elsewhere, Cortland has invested in its Sewage Treatment Facility so that it can accommodate job growth in the dairy and dairy products industry. It is one of the few plants in the region that can accommodate the demands from this type of use.



Development Opportunities



These and many other efforts have created a healthy downtown of which the community is proud. Millions have been invested in building renovations, new businesses have opened, and new jobs created. Downtown is the hub of community life for the City of Cortland and all of Cortland County. City leaders are cognizant, however, that in order to compete in today's national and global economy, a downtown must meet or exceed the highest of standards. Much more is needed than simply fixing some facades, attracting some new businesses, or laying new bricks in order to create a truly great downtown. In order to support the continued growth of the Downtown economy, the City must possess opportunities for development. Cortland is fortunate in that it can accommodate new growth in a number of ways.

Existing Building Stock – Unlike many downtowns ravaged by urban renewal, fires, or demolition, the core of Cortland's Main Street is a largely intact and cohesive collection of attached late 19th and early 20th century mixed use commercial blocks. This historic architecture led to the Downtown being designated a National Register of Historic District.

While many of these buildings have been renovated and are fully occupied, vacant spaces remain that provide opportunity for redevelopment, particularly the creation of new market rate housing units. According to a recent analysis from the Cortland Downtown Partnership, there is almost 200,000 SF of upper floor vacant space that ripe for reuse. In addition, there are commercial spaces on main floors for new retail and commercial opportunities. Located in the Main Street/Tompkins Street Historic District, these structures are eligible for Historic Preservation Tax Credits, which makes them more attractive to potential developers. They all provide opportunities for the community to implement its goals. By renovating these buildings, and installing elevators, the community will also be able to create more handicapped accessible living units, in partnership with Access to Independence, a local advocacy group. This will further the City's goal of providing housing options for all.



Developable Land – In late 2015, the City hired the urban planning firm of Randall-West to undertake a study of development opportunities in the Downtown. The study also included investigation into the current parking situation in the Downtown. All parking in the Downtown is surface parking, and the study showed that the ratio of land used for parking and land used for buildings was high for a typical downtown. It also showed that parking is often less than 50 percent occupied during peak periods. Simply, the City has the opportunity to accommodate new development by building on 4+ acres of surface parking area. The study also showed that by moving to structured parking rather than all surface parking, the City would be able to use land more effectively, and create a denser downtown, which provides both economic and property tax benefits. A full copy of this report is available at www.cortland.org/success.



Brownfield Opportunity Area – The BOA, as detailed elsewhere, will focus on the redevelopment of numerous sites in the 540-acre "Southeast Cortland Redevelopment Area," likely stimulating millions of dollars in new commercial, industrial, and residential development.



Redevelopment Strategies and Opportunities



The City and its partners believe that a successful downtown economic development effort must be well thought out, based on economic reality, and build upon existing assets. The Economic Market Analysis previously detailed provides sound data on which to build retail and housing growth. The community has also detailed three overarching strategies for its efforts. These include 1) Building the Creative Economy, 2) Creating a Complete Downtown Neighborhood; and 3) Re-imagining Infrastructure for the 21st Century. These strategies, fully detailed in Question 8, build on Cortland's existing assets and efforts, and are designed to create an exciting downtown of the future built up upon the foundation of the past: A downtown that will entice the next generation to live, work, play, and invest. These are based, in part, upon the following:

Arts and Cultural Institutions and Activities – Cortland has a deep heritage in arts and music. The Cortland Repertory Theater has been a County fixture for 45 years, and is now a Downtown fixture that continues to grow. Music reverberates through Cortland's soul, and many local residents have moved on from Cortland to the national stage, including Ronnie Dio, lead vocalist for Black Sabbath; Charlie Bertini, acclaimed trumpeter; Steve Daniels of the Steve Daniels Band, and Grammy-nominated Lonnie Park, who still calls the Cortland area home. National touring artist Chris Merkley (www.chrismerkley.com), based in the Cortland area, is planning to move his respected recording studio to Downtown, as detailed in Question 8. Downtown is host to the Main Street Music Series, while the annual Seedstock Music Festival bring dozens of performers to the Cortland countryside. Now in its eighth year, the festival has grown from a small one-day gathering of a few hundred friends to a three day festival celebrating community and life through the vehicle of music and art. SUNY Cortland provided fine arts through its recently renovated Dowd Gallery and the growing BlackBird Film Festival, which showcased 120 – 150 films in the past year.

While all of the cultural assets are too numerous to mention, they are a tremendous base on which to grow Cortland's Creative Economy. Through purposeful collaborations, Cortland is preparing to blend arts and entertainment formally into the local economic development teams' approach to the commercialization of ideas. Connecting programming for startup businesses in an intentional approach to benefit the tremendous number of talented existing local musicians, artists and creators, as well as investing strategically in capital projects, will help Downtown's development in numerous economic health indicators including the creation of businesses and jobs, and the addition of residents and tourists.

College Presence – Cortland is proud to be the home of SUNY Cortland, as well as satellite facilities for Tompkins-Cortland Community College (TC3). TC3's new extension center is located on Main Street in the Downtown, and SUNY Cortland is immediately adjacent to the Downtown. Both institutions were active participants in the development of this application, and will play a significant role in the growing success of the Downtown. SUNY Cortland's tag line, "Seize the Moment, Feel the Momentum" is as appropriate to the Downtown as it is to the College. Several exciting college initiatives that have the potential to integrate and support the community's efforts include:

- **Institute of Applied GIS Drone Technology**

– Building upon Central New York’s commitment to establishing the region as a hub for unmanned aerial vehicles development and testing, SUNY Cortland, in collaboration with Syracuse University’s Data Science Department, is proposing the establishment of an Institute of Applied GIS Drone Technology to address the geographic data management needs related to increased UAV development and use. The faculty and student run Institute will commercialize drone utilization. This new Institute will be on the cutting edge of drone technology, and has the potential to be a significant creator of new jobs in Cortland.

- **Live In Cortland Initiative** – In order to attract employees to live in close proximity to the campus, SUNY has offered small incentive grants to purchase homes in identified City neighborhoods. In the past year, seven properties have been purchased by college staff. The City and the college are working together to expand the Live-In Cortland Initiative.

- **Startup NY** - SUNY Cortland and TC3 are the local participating colleges in the Governor’s Start Up NY program. This program may include sites within the City of Cortland that could create substantial new jobs on which to expand the Downtown Economy.

- **Director of Extended Learning** -

The Director will collaborate with the campus to develop and implement a plan to expand educational program delivery, including online programs, in order to reach to broader audience, and serve the non-traditional student. They will conduct market demand and needs assessment to inform planning and work closely with faculty, staff and the community on program development. This new program will more closely link the College to economic development efforts.

- **Institute for Civic Engagement** –

SUNY Cortland’s Institute for Civic Engagement strives to increase the number of undergraduate students who are engaged in meaningful civic actions by restructuring and reformulating academic programs and processes, extracurricular programs and activities, and the institutional culture. The concept of “meaningful civic actions” includes a wide range of activities by which students are engaged in the lives of their communities (including the college community, the community in which the college is embedded, and the national and international communities). Civic action includes service to the community, and it also includes participation in the political process through activities like voting, participation in traditional politics, and involvement in groups that advocate for change. Underlying civic action is the assumption that students will be encouraged to develop the skills

and knowledge for meaningful participation and, as our college mission statement says, for developing “engaged citizens with a strong social conscience.” Specific programs and projects include the Building Community Leaders Program, the Community Innovation Project, Economic Inequality Initiative (Pathways to Excellence), and the President’s Coalition on Applied Learning. Data from the Institute’s 2014-2015 annual report help show the effectiveness of the collaborations between SUNY Cortland and the rest of the greater Cortland community. In just service-learning alone, 72 faculty members (up from 60 in the previous year), and 183 sections of 67 different courses (up from 143 sections of 64 different courses in the previous year). 2,506 students contributed 172,319 hours of service.

- **Community Innovation Program** -

This SUNY program includes assessing community volunteer needs; serving on the boards of local not-for-profit agencies including the YWCA and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County; forming partnerships with community agencies and facilitating collaboration from the college on community projects and initiatives. It collaborates with and serves on the board of the Cortland Downtown Partnership, working to improve and enhance the quality of life in Downtown Cortland and to support and promote areas businesses while facilitating SUNY Cortland student participation in local initiatives and downtown events.

- **Appalachian Regional Commission Grant**

– SUNY Cortland secured an \$88,000 ARC grant to link college coursework to community economic recovery through entrepreneurship training, involving students in start-ups, and linking interns to identified business needs. This program has coordinated with the Cortland Downtown Partnership’s Cortland Business Innovation Center.

- **TC3 Biz/TC3 Extension Center** – TC3 provides extensive services and support to business in the arena of workforce training, and support. TC3 Biz provides training needs assessments, program consulting, and develops customized training programs for businesses and their workforces. Training can be provided at a TC3 Facility or at the business. TC3’s Extension Center on Main Street provides a Downtown venue for traditional classes as well as business training. TC3 Biz will be an important partner in ensuring that new businesses in Downtown Cortland are provided the training and support they need.



Sports, Recreation, and Tourism – Tourism is the fourth largest industry in New York State, and it continues to grow. In 2014, according to the most recent statewide data available, traveler spending grew 5.4 percent. Cortland’s geographic location and amenities provide significant opportunity to benefit from a tourism market and the “experience consumer.”

Sports and Recreation are in Cortland’s DNA and provides a tremendous opportunity for growth in the economy. With expanding ski centers, SUNY Cortland’s leadership as a top sports and recreation college, numerous sports tournaments, and first class fishing, sports and recreation is quickly becoming a major driver in the economy. This tourism is bolstered by cultural attractions such as the 1890 House Museum, and the National-Register listed Main Street-Tompkins Street Historic District. In 2015 traveler spending generated \$70,896,000 in Cortland County.

Cortland has just completed its second year of a \$1.4 million collaborative “Ski Cortland” marketing campaign funded in part by the Market New York Program. The goal of the effort is to promote outdoor/sport tourism, particularly area ski resorts, with the amenities of Downtown Cortland at the heart. Only eight miles separate Downtown and the Greek Peak Ski area/Hope Lake Lodge and Indoor Water Park. Recently under new ownership, Greek Peak is currently undergoing expansion and improvements. Other local ski centers include Song, Toggenburg, and Labrador Mountains. Through the strategic efforts of paid media, among other marketing tactics, the community continues to position Ski Cortland, NY as one of New York’s premier regions for winter recreation. The goal is to not only increase awareness of the region, but to inspire travel. The 2016/2017 winter campaign began in January and concluded March 15, 2017. In total, 7,413,252 people saw Ski Cortland ads (including Display banner views, Facebook ads and digital audio listens) which garnered 47,946 Results (including Banner clicks, Facebook Ad clicks, Facebook Likes, and Digital audio companion banner clicks). The clicks Ski Cortland digital ads receive surpass industry standards, and visitors spend twice the average amount of time on www.SkiCortlandNY.com digesting the wonderful things that Downtown Cortland and our four mountains have to offer.



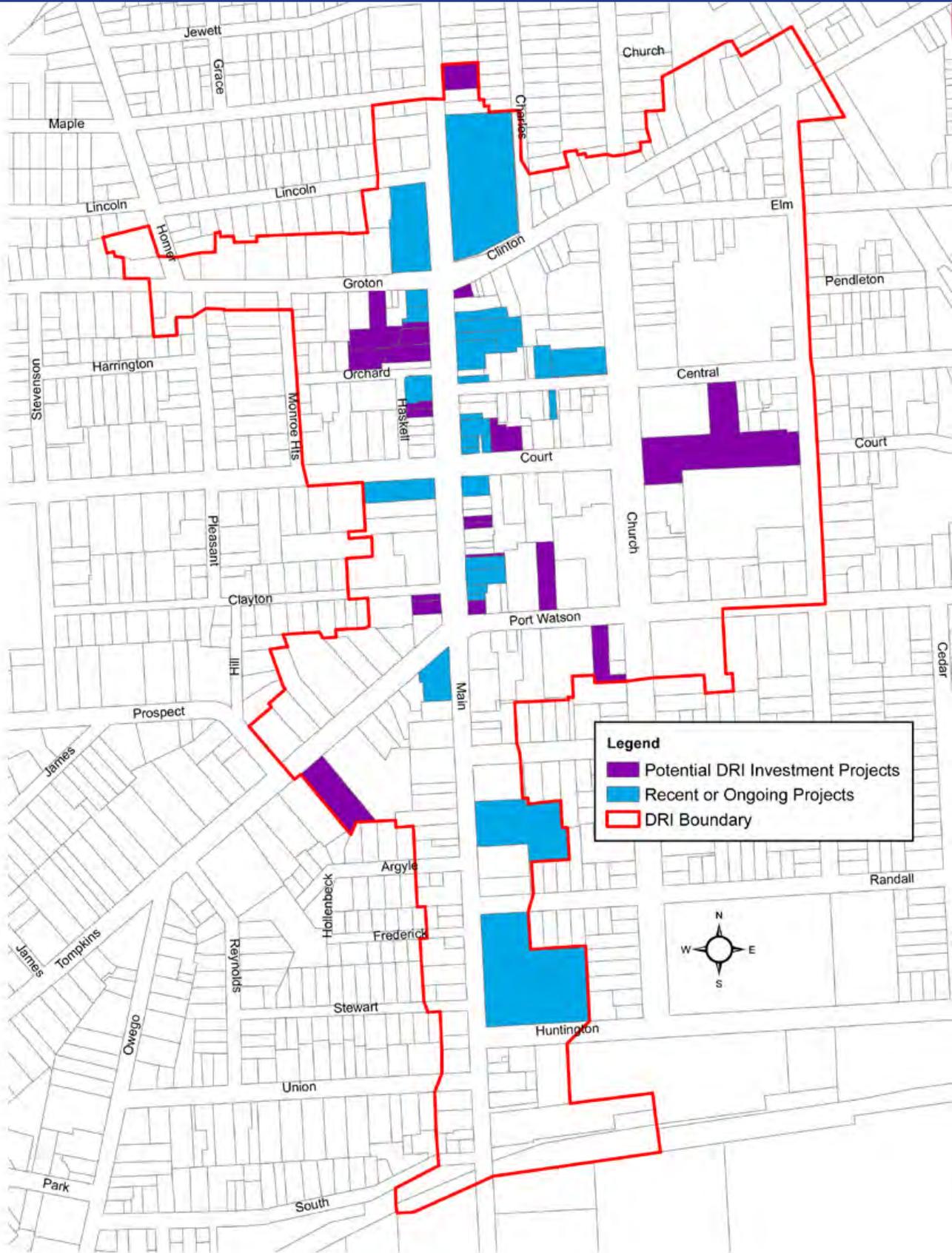
In addition to skiing, Cortland generates significant tourism traffic from a host of other sports and recreation oriented events, including the Empire State Senior Games; the annual Cortaca Jug football game, named by Sport Illustrated as the “biggest little game in college football with 10,000 fans; numerous, NYS sports tournaments; and others. The Cortland Regional Sports Council is specifically focused on fostering economic activity based on Cortland’s sporting events. The new Gutches Park, anticipated to begin on Phase 1 construction this summer, will provide multiple multi-use sports fields on the Route 13 corridor just outside the City. It will be a one-of-a-kind facility in New York State. The project extends the connection from Interstate 81 through the Downtown to the proposed location adjacent to the Byrne Dairy Agritourism facility. The development of additional sports fields will build upon an already impressive sporting infrastructure that allows the Cortland Regional Sports Council and partners to organize and market regional sporting events held in the community. A major driver of the tourism industry in the region already, a recent economic impact analysis for the \$15 million project shows that it will generate \$7.3 million in economic activity over three years.

The Downtown is looking to leverage this recreation and tourism market by providing value-added facilities and programming, including hotel(s), restaurants, shops, and entertainment.

In summary, Downtown Cortland has been the focus of millions of dollars of recent investment, millions more in on-going development, and it has clear, focused, realistic, strategies to build on these investments as well as the inherent strengths and opportunities necessary to grow its market. Funding through the DRI will allow Cortland to fully capitalize on these opportunities.



Location of Investments





Recent or Impending 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.

- ✓ ***The City of Cortland and its Downtown possess major job-creating projects and initiatives with the recent creation of approximately 300 jobs and an additional anticipated creation of over 500 jobs in or near the Downtown;***
- ✓ ***There are over 10 new businesses and 20 expanding businesses in or near Cortland's Downtown area;***
- ✓ ***New job opportunities range from entry-level manufacturing and service positions to professional and management level positions and provide opportunities for employment with a broad range of salaries.***

The City of Cortland and its partners realize that not only does a downtown need a strong economy and quality jobs to support it, but it also must possess qualities that draw new jobs and investment into the community. A high quality of life, sense of place, and a vibrant community are important to both employers and employees, particularly with younger professionals and the creative class. Cortland has partnered with the private sector to assist businesses of all types and size to locate within or near the Downtown. Today, 443 businesses employing 5,100 people are within a half-mile radius of the center of Downtown. These businesses and employment opportunities attract many professionals, college professors, tech jobs, retail, government, manufacturing and more. Employees, as well as local residents and SUNY students, provide a large market from which to sustain long-term growth. With Cortland's Downtown as the urban core of Cortland County, further investment will yield economic benefits throughout the City and surrounding area.

Recent job growth success and impending/potential job growth opportunities are highlighted below. The City of Cortland, the Business Development Corporation, and/or the Cortland Downtown Partnership have worked hand-in-hand with the private sector to leverage significant investment and assist in the creation of new jobs. These accomplishments speak directly to the community's ability to leverage DRI funding and create hundreds of new jobs in the City.



Recent Job Growth:

Recent economic development success, in and within proximity to the Downtown, has created jobs in many different employment sectors including retail, food production, manufacturing, and in the high-tech market. These jobs range from entry level to highly skilled, well paid positions. Some recent examples include:

Downtown Businesses – Cumulatively, Downtown Cortland is the largest employer in the community, directly responsible for over 5,100 jobs. Downtown businesses range from small shops to large multi-national corporations. The aforementioned Downtown Market Analysis has identified opportunities to grow the Downtown economy, particularly in the retail sector, and there is available commercial space to accommodate this growth. With the incentive from the DRI, downtown job growth will continue to expand, potentially creating several hundred new jobs.

Microenterprise Assistance – Nationally, over 60% of job growth comes from small businesses and startups. Much of Cortland's economy is built on new, small businesses and industry that have grown. Today, as in the past, small, locally grown businesses are the heartbeat of a downtown. Seeding new small businesses now will yield great dividends down the road. With over 20% of all city residents living in poverty, new business startups are out of reach for many. To address this problem, and to capitalize on the entrepreneurial spirit in the community, the City has secured a number of CDBG awards to provide Microenterprise Assistance to lower income residents who wish to start or grow businesses. Grant funds were, and are currently available, to allow recipients to purchase equipment, expand capacity, and otherwise improve and expand their business. These programs have always prioritized downtown businesses and in recent years have resulted in 6 new businesses, and over 20 expanded businesses, creating over 50 new jobs. The programs provide the dual benefit of creating new downtown businesses while improving the socioeconomic standing of its residents. Cortland was most recently awarded \$200,000 through the 2016 CFA funding round to continue to create and expand new, small, locally owned businesses. It is anticipated that the funding will assist with the creation of 4 new businesses and the expansion of at least 4 other businesses in or near the downtown.





Byrne Dairy – Byrne Dairy located a new Greek yogurt and cheese manufacturing facility in the Town of Cortlandville four years ago, investing more than \$45 million in a new 40,000 square foot agricultural manufacturing site. Doubling as a regional tourist attraction, Byrne plans to complement existing tourism by building out the site to include a state of the art outdoor performance space. Higher paying jobs at Byrne Dairy will continue to benefit the community in general, and downtown in particular, as employees and guests visit the downtown shops, restaurants, and taverns. In total, 80 new jobs have been created at this location, and additional expansion of this industry in the community is anticipated.

Although not located in the City, Cortland was instrumental to the facility's construction in the community. In order to bring Byrne to the community, the Cortland Wastewater Treatment Plant required upgrading to process dairy waste from the new facility. The City redeveloped and repurposed the sewage treatment facility to meet Byrne's needs, as well as the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay watershed directives. In a sustainable approach, the City developed a plan to utilize methane from processing whey waste in an anaerobic digester to create electricity. The cost savings, when applied to new equipment costs, allowed the City to not only process the waste from Byrne, but to do so at no cost. These upgrades will position Cortland to attract other dairy producers to the area.



KIK Custom Products, Inc. – A national leader in the production and packaging of hospitality and home products, KIK faced a significant challenge three years ago when a host of circumstances prevented the disposal of its wastewater through the city treatment facility. Transporting wastewater for disposal outside of the community cost the company more than \$1 million per year. In an effort to assist KIK, City, County, and company officials developed a first-of-its-kind public-private partnership. The City and the company developed a wastewater pre-treatment facility at the plant, just one block from Downtown. The City, recognizing the importance of the facility to the community, provided a \$400,000 Community Development loan to assist with financing construction cost of the plant. This project is now saving the company \$1.2 million annually in waste disposal costs, has helped reduce truck traffic in the neighborhood, and has solidified a community relationship with a major employer. Since the agreement, KIK has moved production lines from Mississippi, Texas and California to the Cortland facility and has added 120 new jobs over the past year, with more expected. This project demonstrates the Cortland community's ability to partner with the private sector to find creative solutions to creating jobs. This mindset of enacting creative, innovative, and forward-thinking solutions to ignite investment and job growth will be showcased in the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Glyph Production Technologies – This high-tech manufacturer of electronic storage devices for the music and creative industries moved from Ithaca to Cortland several years ago, creating 16 new jobs in the community. The City assisted this expansion project with a community development loan. Cortland has a deep heritage of music, and the addition of Glyph is a perfect fit as the City moves into the 21st Century.

Cortland Plastics – Cortland Plastics International was incorporated in 2006 with the vision of being the premier Continuous Shuttle Blow Molder in the United States. Located on South Main Street, they were established with assistance from the City of Cortland. Since that time, they have continued to grow and now employ 45 persons.

Natrium Products – Natrium is a specialty manufacturer of sodium bicarbonate for the North American market. Founded in a building adjacent to downtown, with assistance from the City, they have recently expanded, building a new multi-million dollar warehouse, and have created over 22 jobs.

With the exception of Byrne Dairy, all of these new and expanding businesses are located in, or within walking distance of, Downtown. Their continued expansion will only enhance Downtown's economy. In addition to these growing businesses, there are other major employers within walking distance of Downtown:

SUNY Cortland – A top income driver and employer in the City, and in the region, SUNY Cortland is one of the more popular institutions in SUNY's 64-campus system. SUNY Cortland has a current enrollment of nearly 7,000 students and employs 1,100 faculty and staff that live, work, and play in and around the Downtown. The College typically hires 60 full time persons per year, and has stated that the quality of life in the community and Downtown is important in recruiting new faculty. As detailed elsewhere, SUNY Cortland has identified the need for an infusion of quality, market rate rental housing for incoming staff. A testament to their commitment to the community, through the "Live in Cortland" initiative, faculty and staff are now eligible to receive up to four thousand dollars to offset closing costs on purchasing a home in the City. A 2008 study by SUNY Cortland's Department of Economics showed that the College generated \$278 million in regional economic activity. In addition to the economic impact, the vibrancy, vitality, and youthfulness provided by the college have a direct impact on the character of the community and the Downtown. The institution continues to work hand in hand with community leaders to ensure a long-lasting partnership and a healthy community.

Cortland Regional Medical Center – The hospital is a major employer in Cortland County, and like the college, is central to the effort to bring young professionals to the community. The hospital is located about a half-mile from downtown and employs approximately 700 people with annual wages and benefits exceeding \$58 million.

A major new housing initiative on downtown's south side (Crescent Commons) will result in new, market-rate accommodations for faculty and physicians alike, and will also attract new consumers wanting to enjoy a city-center lifestyle.

Cortland County Government – The City of Cortland is the County Seat for Cortland County. Both the Courthouse and the Governmental offices are located in the Downtown area. This accounts for approximately 500 employees.

Clearly, there are sufficient and varied employment opportunities in and around Downtown Cortland to sustain a strong downtown economy. This is born out of increasing downtown investment, waiting lists for new downtown living units, and a growing sense that downtown is on the cusp of great success. As equally important as area jobs are to the support of a vibrant downtown, past and current downtown development projects are attracting and supporting new development and creating new jobs.

Question 3 detailed the redevelopment initiatives currently advancing in the community. These initiatives are projected to create employment opportunities and build upon an existing industry cluster and job creation priorities for the Central New York Region, including finance/insurance, digital and electronic devices, tourism, and agriculture. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will allow the community to achieve its vision sooner than would otherwise be possible.



Job Growth Potential

McNeil Insurance – This locally grown insurance company, which now has a national presence, was feared to be moving out of State, but is now committed to Cortland and undertaking a major physical expansion in the Downtown. The City of Cortland worked diligently with the Empire State Development Corporation to incentivize local expansion of McNeil Insurance, effectively curbing the once anticipated relocation. Specifically, McNeil Insurance is now expanding its operations to downtown and is currently completing an approximate \$10,000,000 renovation of 4 key downtown buildings to accommodate a major expansion of its business operations. The company employs many young, highly educated professionals of the variety the City strives to attract and retain. McNeil's downtown expansion, once completed, will result in the creation of up to 100 new, well-paying professional jobs in the downtown. A strong downtown with quality housing will be vital to recruiting and retaining these professionals. It is anticipated that this company will continue to grow in the near future as McNeil Insurance envisions itself as a prominent player in the high-risk insurance market.

Cortland Business Innovation Center – As detailed earlier, the Cortland Downtown Partnership is redeveloping a Downtown building as a Business Innovation Center. The Center's programming and concept was adapted from Syracuse University and The Tech Garden. Programming was seed funded by an Appalachian Regional Commission grant in 2011 that started a co-taught CDP/SUNY Cortland Entrepreneurship series of classes. The connection between the facility and the campus has been formalized through the collaboration of institutionalizing coursework. The partnership between SUNY Cortland and the Cortland Downtown Partnership includes the creation of academic and practitioner, co-taught, entrepreneurship coursework on campus and programming on site at the Business Innovation Center. The facility will also offer incubator space for new businesses. One of the first successes of the Cortland Business Innovation Center is Long Island Bagel, a popular new Downtown eatery. Three SUNY Cortland students participated in SUNY's entrepreneurial program, received assistance through the Center, and opened the downtown bagel shop in late 2014. Originally slated to be a participant in the City's Microenterprise Assistance Program, their immediate success forced them to expand beyond the maximum five employees allowed under the Microenterprise program, rendering them ineligible for program participation. Long Island Bagel continues to be one of the most popular casual dining options in the City. The CBIC also assisted with the successful launch and growth of Solar Systems Xpress. The company graduated from the program and has since expanded to San Francisco. These young entrepreneurs are seen as the City's future, and the Mayor has asked one of the owners to sit on the Investment Strategy Steering Committee should Cortland be selected for the DRI.

Downtown Small Businesses – The aforementioned Downtown Market Analysis identified the gaps in the local economy that can be filled by the downtown area, as well as growth opportunities, particularly in the clothing, gift, and restaurant segments. It also identified a gap in online sales. The City and the Downtown Partnership are in agreement that small business development efforts in the Downtown should be data driven, rather than the "by the gut" approach so often employed in Downtowns. The Market Analysis provides the tools for the community to make informed decisions to move the Downtown economy forward. Now that the Market Analysis is complete, the community can continue to proactively build the small business foundation of the Downtown. It is conservatively estimated that small business growth in the Downtown can create over 300 jobs in the next five years.



Hotel Development – The City is currently working with developers to advance plans for an 85 to 105-room hotel in the Downtown. The envisioned hotel would employ approximately 45 people. These jobs would be available to a broad segment of the Cortland population, from entry level cleaning positions, to front desk staff, and management. – a significant employment opportunity for people living in and around downtown.

Brownfield Opportunity Area – As aforementioned, the City is moving forward on efforts to reclaim its vacant, underutilized or abandoned industrial and commercial sites. The City's Brownfield Opportunity Area project is currently being completed in partnership with the New York State Department of State and will ultimately result in new redevelopment strategies for the City's historic industrial neighborhoods. The BOA, bolstered by and in concert with the DRI, has the potential to create hundreds of new commercial and manufacturing jobs.

Jenlor Energy and Buckbee-Mears Redevelopment – A recently completed reclamation of a former manufacturing site on the city's southeast side offers tremendous opportunity for business relocation and employment and will have a direct impact on the vitality of downtown Cortland when occupied. The site contains 200,000 square feet of manufacturing and warehouse space on 50 acres at one of the region's most attractive facilities for business development. Jenlor Energy is the first business to take advantage of a portion of the reclaimed manufacturing space and is in the process of setting up operations that will create more than 35 jobs at the once vacant manufacturing location. Jenlor is in the business of manufacturing wood pellets and plans to source a large percentage of its raw material from the wood waste of local timber producers.

In summary, there are a large number of employees in and around the Downtown to support a healthy and vibrant Downtown economy. These jobs include opportunities for those at all levels of income and skill. The Cortland community has succeeded, under difficult circumstances, in creating sufficient employment opportunities to increase overall employment rates and reduce poverty. The DRI will only strengthen the community's ability to generate new jobs.



Attractiveness of the Downtown



Bob Ellis/Cortland Standard



The downtown should be an attractive and livable community for diverse populations of varying ages, income, ability, mobility, and cultural background.

- ✓ **Both subsidized and public housing are located within the Downtown, as well as a growing number of market rate rental units, ensuring that all have access to decent, affordable housing.**
- ✓ **Downtown Cortland is home to a greater density of retail, restaurant, and commercial enterprise than any other community on the I-81 Corridor between Syracuse and Binghamton.**
- ✓ **The City provides multi-modal transportation between many local destinations, as well as neighboring Tompkins County and local educational institutions.**
- ✓ **The City is four square miles with a robust network of sidewalks and bicycle routes connecting all areas of the City to the Downtown, making it a very walkable and bike-friendly community.**
- ✓ **Cortland has a number of well maintained parks with accessible amenities, trails, playing fields, swimming pools, and gathering spaces, all within walking distance of the Downtown.**
- ✓ **Cortland Regional Medical Center is located within one half mile of Downtown.**
- ✓ **Cortland has an artistic and cultural presence befitting of a much larger community including, but not limited to, live theater, a vibrant music scene, movie festivals, and a fine arts museum, as well as college sporting events.**
- ✓ **The City is currently working with Finger Lakes Technologies to provide Downtown with fiber optic wireless internet with the fastest speeds available in the State.**
- ✓ **Over 60 market rate apartments are currently being developed within the Downtown.**



Cortland recognizes that in order to compete for new industry, investment, jobs, and residents that it must create a community that meets the standards of a 21st Century city. It cannot focus simply on infrastructure and financial incentives in order to draw tomorrow's workforce. It must foster an interesting, exciting, fun, and unique community with a strong sense of place. The Cortland Downtown and the greater Cortland area possess the amenities and sense of place to be a truly livable community and to compete in today's market. Cortland is a Climate Smart Community, Tree City USA, and a Preserve America Community. The City is physically beautiful with an extensive collection of historic architecture. It offers lifestyle choices that meet the desires and needs of young adults, families, and the aging, including:

Housing Affordability and Type – Mixed use downtown buildings and adjacent residential areas provide a variety of housing options for all market segments, including student housing, entry level units for young millennials, and higher end units for professionals and baby boomers. Both subsidized and public housing are located within the Downtown, ensuring that all have access to decent, affordable housing. However, a large demand for new, quality rental housing remains. The high profit margins on student rental housing has held back market rate rental housing development, and there is now a much greater demand than supply. This poses both a housing and economic development issue to the community as some young professionals are finding housing outside Cortland. It also provides a tremendous growth opportunity for the Downtown. There are a number of buildings that have vacant space ripe for redevelopment and provide the opportunity to develop needed downtown housing for all income levels. The development of market rate downtown housing is a top priority for the City to continue growing the population, and both decrease the property tax burden on property owners and generate funds to reinvest into sustainable development.





Commercial, Retail, and Restaurants – Downtown Cortland is home to a greater density of retail, restaurant, and commercial enterprise than any other community on the I-81 Corridor between Syracuse and Binghamton. More than 175 businesses fill the storefronts lining Main Street. Approximately 85 percent of those are locally owned. Upper story commerce is primarily office space. Businesses include delis, pubs, bakeries, fine-dining, pizza parlors, sporting goods stores, jewelers, a grocery, pawn shop and others. Other commercial activities include the post office, the newspaper, accountants, insurance agencies, 3 banks, 2 pharmacies, and hair salons. The City is confident that the many shops and services available in the downtown are sufficient to support a vital residential community, but always welcomes new and growing businesses.

Cortland has a wide variety of eateries, coffeehouses, and taverns to meet the varied needs and desires of all ages and incomes. Offerings range from pizza parlors, to artistic cafes, to ethnic dining, to farm breweries, and bars that provide a vibrant nightlife. BRU 64, (www.bru64.com) one of the most popular new businesses in the City, is a coffee house by day and a Pour House by night. Cortland Beer Company (www.cortlandbeer.com) is, as they say, “Hop Heaven in the Heart of Downtown Cortland”. Pita Gourmet (www.pitagourmet.com) was opened by Lebanese immigrants in 1996 and is a destination restaurant offering Middle Eastern Cuisine. Pita Gourmet has been voted “Best Falafel in Central New York”. Indulge is a bakery/café offering fresh made breads and pastries. Coffee Mania, (www.cnycoffee.com) roasts coffee in a repurposed train depot in the City just south of the Downtown. Their popular coffee can be purchased at shops throughout Central New York, at one of their local drive-through coffee windows, or their coffeehouse Origins in nearby Homer. The Syracuse Post Standard also recently voted Coffee Mania as “Best Coffee Shop in Central New York”. Downtown restaurants and taverns contribute approximately 7.5% of all County sales tax revenues. Whatever one’s tastes or thirsts, it can be satisfied in downtown Cortland.



Access to Healthy Food – The Local Food Market on Main Street provides a full array of organic, pesticide free eating options. The 7,000SF full service grocery store also hosts the “Whole Heart Café” providing healthy prepared foods. A portion of the produce for the Local Food Market comes from Main Street Farms, located less than a mile away in the City’s South End Neighborhood. Main Street Farms grows organic produce, which is sold to local grocers as well through a CSA. They now have 11 CSA pick up locations with five in the Cortland area and six in Syracuse. The recent construction of high tunnels, unheated, non-permanent greenhouses, purchased with assistance from the City of Cortland’s Microenterprise Program, allows them to grow year round. Main Street Farms is continuing to expand, with plans for a year-round indoor farmer’s market, as well as expansion of indoor agriculture and aquaponics. Potential sites for both expansion projects are in or adjacent to the Downtown. The City believes that this type of urban farming is vital to creating a community that will attract millennials to live, work, and invest. In addition, a weekly downtown Farmer’s Market, in its 42nd year, is located on Main Street from May through October. This provides another venue for local residents to access fresh, locally produced food products and a true farm-to-table experience. A full service grocery store is located less than a mile from the Downtown. The complete street redevelopment along Clinton Avenue will provide a better multi-modal connection between the Downtown and this grocery. In addition, the Seven Valleys Health Coalition has plans to provide a year-round indoor farmers’ market and commercial kitchen. The plans for this project are currently in the works and will be an ideal way to increase access to, and consumption of locally and regionally produced foods.



Multi-modal Transportation, Walkability, Bikeability – Cortland is well served by an intermodal and interconnected transportation network. It is easily accessible by automobile from I-81 and NYS highways, and Downtown has more than sufficient parking to accommodate vehicle use.

Cortland County's bus system also serves the City. Known locally as "Cortland Transit", bus routes originate at the County Office Building in the Downtown. Four routes service the Cortland-Cortlandville-Homer area, allowing easy access to all parts of the City. If these routes do not fit a specific need, "Dial-a-Ride" is also available. Routes also connect the City to more rural areas of the County as well as to Tompkins-Cortland Community College (TC3) and Cornell University. The County is now implementing Smart Traxx, which will allow smart phone users to know exactly where the bus is, increasing the ease of use of the bus system. Cortland is also committed to creating a walkable/bike-friendly community. With just under 4 square miles, and relatively flat topography, one can easily walk or bike to almost any destination in the City. A full network of sidewalks is in place that connects all areas of the community and the City is currently finalizing a Ped/Bike Plan (funded with NYSERDA Cleaner Greener funding) to continue to create a truly walkable and bikable community. More information on this plan is included in Question 6.

Abundant and Accessible Recreational Opportunities – There are a wide array of recreational opportunities in and around the Downtown area. Courthouse Park, located one block from Main Street, surrounds the stately Cortland County Courthouse. The mature trees and fountain provides a relaxing open space in which to gather, enjoy lunch, or simply

relax. It is an oasis in the otherwise urban downtown. There are at least four other City parks within walking distance of Main Street. These provide a wide array of recreational opportunities, from ball fields to skate parks, to walking trails, to the newly reconstructed Wickwire Pool (completed with NYS EPF assistance), most of which are accessible for all. The City has recently launched a new capital initiative to upgrade City park facilities, including new playgrounds, and is investigating the development of a dog park to support the community and travelers, intentionally marketing the park as destination for pet owners traveling I-81.

Lastly, as part of the BOA project, the City is investigating the feasibility of converting a former rail line into a public greenway running through the South and East ends of the City and connecting three City parks. Although not directly in the Downtown, this greenway would help to transform a large swath of the City and connect the downtown to various neighborhoods. The Cortland Rural Cemetery, located adjacent to the Downtown and SUNY Cortland, provides a contemplative setting, and residents are urged to utilize this area as the open space it is. The Cemetery Board recently created a walking trail with interpretive signs to promote use of the land as a park and teach residents of its history. In addition to public parkland, both the YMCA and the YWCA are located in the Downtown and the Lime Hollow Nature Center and Greek Peak Mountain Resort are just a short drive away. In summary, Cortland has recreational opportunities for all persons, age groups, and abilities.

Access to Healthcare – Citizens of the City are fortunate to have Cortland Regional Medical Center within a half mile of the Downtown. Along with CRMC, many doctors and specialists maintain offices in close proximity to the hospital and Downtown.





Academic, Cultural, and Entertainment Amenities – Regardless of personal tastes, Cortland Provides cultural and entertainment outlets to suit all needs. Much more than a “college town”, Cortland offers artistic and cultural amenities befitting of a larger community including, but not limited to:

- **Cortland Repertory Theater** – The Theater, long a staple in the Cortland County Community, now has a permanent year-round home in the Downtown. In addition to live theater, their Downtown location is allowing them to expand into other performing arts and events. CRT is quickly becoming the main cultural attraction in the area.
- **Music** – Music is ingrained in Cortland’s DNA, and the extensive live music scene in the City provides many outlets, from the Friday Night Main Street Music Series, to coffeehouses, to classical concerts, to bar bands. There are music studios in upper floors of Main Street buildings, and it is not unusual to hear live music floating down from above as musicians practice. If one is a music lover, of any genre, they will find a place in Cortland.
- **Blackbird Film Festival** – This yearly festival began in 2016, and is hosted annually by SUNY Cortland. The festival is held on the third week of April. The Blackbird Film Festival began exclusively for student filmmakers and has expanded to include films from all genres and all walks of life. The 2017 edition of the festival featured more films, more events, and remains free for all. Scott Williams, a 1982 SUNY Cortland Alum and executive producer and lead writer for the hit television show “NCIS”, hosted an industry workshop at the festival this year as well.
- **Seedstock Music Festival** – The annual Seedstock Music Festival brings dozens of performers to the Cortland countryside. Now in its eighth year, the festival has grown from a small one-day gathering of a few hundred friends to a three-day festival celebrating community and life through music and art.
- **First Friday Gallery Exhibits** – Every First Friday for the last several years, the Cultural Council of Cortland County has planned and promoted downtown as a walkable art trail celebrating culture and commerce.
- **Colleges** – SUNY Cortland offer numerous artistic performances, lectures, and art exhibits that provide cultural outlets for those of all ages. This includes art exhibits at the Dowd Art Gallery, student presentations, and much more. This creates a cultural atmosphere that is unique to college communities.
- **Community Events** – The Downtown area is host to many community festivals and events for all ages, including Chill-A-Bration, First Friday Arts, Dairy Parade, Saint Anthony’s Italian Heritage Festival, Friday Night Main Street Music Series, Taste of Downtown, Arts & Wine Festival, Brockway Truck Festival, the Great Pumpkin Festival, and First Night events.

Sports – SUNY Cortland is a sports school and Cortland is a sports town. In addition to many College sporting events and recreational offerings, Cortland is home to the Cortland Crush, a summer hire developmental club affiliated with major league baseball, the Empire State Senior Games, and numerous sports tournaments and events brought to the community by the Cortland Regional Sports Council. Greek Peak Mountain Resort is just a short 10-minute drive from Downtown. Cortland was awarded a Market New York grant to connect the Downtown to area ski centers. For several years, Cortland was in the national spotlight as host of the New York Jets summer training camp. Sports Illustrated dubbed the “Cortaca Jug” (the annual SUNY Cortland/Ithaca College Football game), as the “Biggest Little Game in the Nation”. Cortland offers anything the sports, health, and fitness minded person could desire.

Broadband Accessibility – Cortland is equipped with a full fiber optic network in and around the Downtown. The City is currently working with Finger Lakes Technologies to provide Downtown with Fiber Optic Wireless Internet with the fastest speeds available to date.

Community Design and/or Housing for All Ages – The City has always had a vested interest in bringing young professionals into the Downtown, as well as allowing the opportunity for empty nesters to downsize their living arrangements. In order to keep with the demand of the changing demographics, the City has plans to complete 60 market rate apartments within walking distance of the Downtown.





Articulate the policies in place that increase the livability and quality of life of the downtown. Examples include the use of local land banks, modern zoning codes, comprehensive plans, complete streets plans, transit-oriented development, non-discrimination laws, age-friendly policies, and a downtown management structure. If policies achieving this goal are not currently in place, describe the ability of the municipality to create and implement such policies.

- ✓ ***The 2012 Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Market Analysis, Climate Change Plan, and Ped/Bike Plan are important documents that will allow the City to focus on goals that will benefit the future well-being of its citizens, and improve their quality of life.***
- ✓ ***The City's Zoning Ordinance, newly updated in 2017, incorporates the policies of smart growth, New Urbanism, LEED-ND, and other sustainable initiatives. The new ordinance includes standards for Downtown redevelopment, ensuring that historic character of the Downtown Historic District is maintained.***
- ✓ ***The City, the Cortland Downtown Partnership, and downtown stakeholders work together to bring cultural and commercial vibrancy to the Downtown in all seasons.***
- ✓ ***All of the City's plans that involve transportation include and encourage the concept of complete streets. This adds to the robust network of sidewalks and bicycle routes throughout the City.***
- ✓ ***Cortland has the building blocks to make the City a "Smart City" and the most technologically and energy efficient City in Central New York.***
- ✓ ***The City prides itself in its accessibility and inclusiveness, as well as its continuous cycle of improvements that serve the community regardless of age or limitations.***
- ✓ ***The City has adopted the Section 421m tax abatement project to stimulate redevelopment of vacant mixed use buildings in the downtown.***

In previous decades, Cortland thrived on a manufacturing economy that produced a myriad of products. However, starting in the late 1970's, the manufacturing base began a slow decline, as it did throughout Upstate New York. Cortland has remained resilient, however, and has established policies to build a better future. The City is working to build a new, stronger economy and create a healthy, sustainable community, breathing new life into the compact, walkable, culturally rich Downtown, and creating a new City for the 21st Century.



Planning and Implementation Documents and Policies

Comprehensive Plan – In 2012, the City focused its effort on the creation and implementation of a Citywide Comprehensive Plan. This long-range plan was drafted to provide an in-depth inventory and analysis of the City's existing conditions, and provide a large-scale image, attainable goals, and recommendations for future action. The Comprehensive Plan is an important guiding document that allows the City to focus on goals that will benefit the future. The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes the importance of a strong downtown as the bedrock for a strong community and economy.

Downtown Market Analysis – The City of Cortland has undertaken a detailed market analysis of its Downtown. The Downtown Economic Market Analysis, completed in early 2017, documents existing economic conditions, researches demographic and economic trends, identifies the market area and target markets, includes detailed customer profiles and preferences, projects future trends, estimates current market supply and prospective market demand, determines the district's share of the demand gap, and identifies opportunities for economic growth. In addition to retail and commercial office demand, it also details the demand for a Downtown hotel. The Market Analysis provides the community with the information it needs to strengthen the local economy based on sound, objective data.





Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) – The City of Cortland is in the midst of completing a Step 2 Nomination Study for a Brownfield Opportunity Area. The 540 acre “Southeast Cortland Redevelopment Area”, is be a mixed industrial, commercial, and residential area of the City. The BOA, which is immediately adjacent to the Downtown, will be a positive influence on downtown development.

The anticipated benefits of this project include a detailed understanding of potential environmental issues in the area, an inventory of developable properties, and, most importantly, coordinated strategies to address economic development and neighborhood issues. With few greenfield development opportunities left in the City, Cortland must work to clean and redevelop existing sites: returning them to quality, productive industrial, commercial, residential, and park uses. Undertaking the BOA and the DRI concurrently will maximize the impact of both.

Tax Incentives – The City understands that, despite the need to generate property taxes, it must “play the long game” with the knowledge that tax incentives in the short term yield results in the long term. Cortland, along with Cortland County and the Cortland School District, adopted Section 421m of the NYS Tax Law. This tax abatement allows a mixed use dwelling within the Central Business district to receive a 20-year tax exemption if constructed or substantially rehabbed and partially occupied by low-moderate income individuals. This incentive encourages the purchase and rehabilitation of largely vacant buildings within the Central Business District and has helped to create new housing units in the Downtown. The adoption of 421m demonstrates Cortland’s willingness to use all available resources to stimulate Downtown development.

Community Policing – Safety is a concern for citizens in every community. An example of the City’s drive to keep the community safe and engage community members in a healthy, positive manner is the Cortland City Police Department’s Community Oriented Policing Initiative. In 2016, the City won a competitive grant for funding through the United States Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services Program (COPS). Cortland’s police department was one of only two departments in the State of New York that were awarded funding under the nationwide 2016 COPS program. The City will receive \$125,000 over the next three years to promote positive community engagement and interaction between the police department and the residents, patrons, and business owners in Cortland’s Downtown. Specifically, the grant funds were used to hire a new police officer that is assigned to the Main Street “beat”. To encourage positive interaction between the police force and downtown patrons, the downtown beat officer makes rounds on Main Street, on foot, during regular business hours and is expected to be a consistent and “friendly face” of the police force in the Downtown. Officer Abbott is quickly becoming a friendly fixture in Downtown Cortland.

Fair Housing – The City of Cortland is committed to the provision of equal access and equal housing opportunities for all its residents, and has an adopted Fair Housing Plan to formalize this commitment. Discrimination in the sale, rental, or financing of dwellings on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap or familial status is specifically prohibited by the Federal Fair Housing Law of Title VIII of the 1968 Civil Rights Act. While the federal law protects from discrimination in housing, the City recognizes that this is only the first step towards fair housing and undertakes local action to ensure that all residents are aware of their rights and receive the assistance they need.



Zoning and Transportation

Sustainable and Progressive Zoning and Ordinances – With the help of a \$112,000 Cleaner Greener Communities Grant, and a \$38,000 match from the City, Cortland has developed a new progressive zoning ordinance. The current zoning is outmoded and predates the inception of smart growth, New Urbanism, LEED-ND, and other sustainable initiatives important to the City. The new ordinance, to be adopted in the fall of 2017, will incorporate, among other features, standards for Downtown redevelopment, ensuring that historic character of the Downtown Historic District is maintained. A new, user friendly zoning ordinance will ensure consistency for new development projects and further the City's goals. Also included in the scope of this project is the development of a small area plan for the neighborhood surrounding SUNY Cortland, adjacent to the Downtown. The overall goal of this Plan is to see that area preserved, re-connected, more accessible, and more supportive of redevelopment opportunities and community housing initiatives, in particular the Live-In Cortland Initiative. Live-In Cortland was implemented to encourage SUNY Cortland employees to purchase and occupy homes in the neighborhoods close to campus, and along the I-81 gateway into the City. Along the same lines is the City's "Positively Cortland" movement. Positive attitudes and efforts are paramount in the quest to buoy the expectations of the community. The Positively Cortland Committee, established by the Mayor, is made up of a number of City stakeholder that meet regularly to develop the ways and means to keep the City moving in the right direction.

In line with safety and quality of life measures, the City has passed a "Vacant Buildings" law that is one of the most progressive in the State. This law is in place to address any buildings that remain vacant, boarded over, unsightly, unsafe, and that have a negative effect on the surrounding neighborhood. This is particularly troublesome in residential and residential-commercial neighborhoods. The purpose of the law is to establish a program for identifying and registering vacant buildings; to determine the responsibilities of owners of vacant buildings and structures; and to accelerate the rehabilitation of vacant properties. This program initiates a dialogue with building owners, and encourages them to keep their buildings in use. Since the start of 2016, this law has resulted in at least nine vacant buildings being renovated or removed.

Re-thinking Transportation – The compact nature of the City lends many opportunities for multi-modal transportation, and the development of transportation alternatives that benefit both the health of the citizens and the environment. The City has determined that it should fundamentally re-think how people get into and around the City and Downtown. The process of reinvention involves every aspect of the City, and includes the initiatives detailed below:

Complete Streets – All of the City's plans that involve transportation include and encourage the concept of complete streets. The City as a whole has a robust sidewalk system and wide boulevards. It makes logical sense to engage bicyclists and walkers in a way that will allow them to walk or ride through the City in its entirety. The Seven Valleys Health Coalition is a partner with the City in encouraging alternative transportation as a healthy way of life.

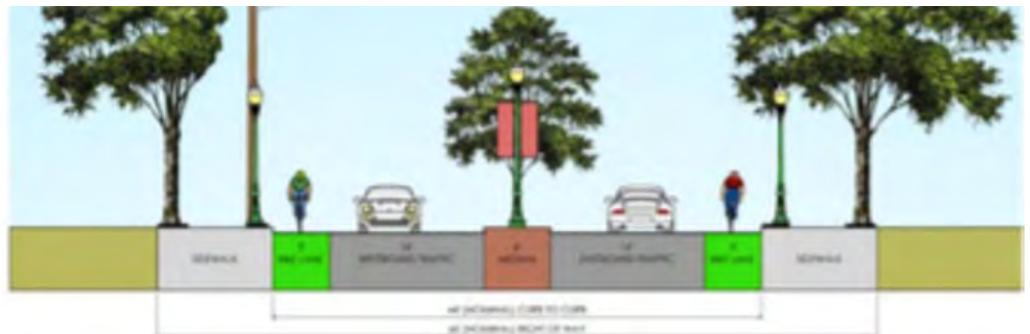




Two-Way Main Street – For many decades, Main Street has been a one-way street, which has presented both advantages and disadvantages. These concerns have caused the City to investigate how to best utilize the street system to make downtown more accessible and customer friendly, create a high quality sense of place, and enhance intermodal network connectivity. The City has undertaken a traffic analysis to investigate the physical and economic impacts of converting Main Street to a two-way thoroughfare. \$35,000 of funding for the traffic analysis was procured through Empire State Development in 2015. The plan has since been completed, and the City is taking the findings to the public, and considering the impacts prior to taking any action.

Northeast Gateway and Clinton Avenue Enhancement Initiative – As part of this initiative, major improvements will be made near the I-81 Exit 11 interchange which is the gateway into the City; Clinton Avenue/Route 13 which connects the gateway to the Downtown will be redeveloped into a complete street; and the Clinton Avenue/Church Street intersection, at the gateway to Downtown, will be converted from a confusing signaled intersection to a round-a-bout. With significant funding for this multi-million dollar effort already committed, this project will transform the way people enter into the community and find their way to Downtown.

Ped-Bike Plan – The City is also investigating potential improvements to its pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and how it integrates to the City's street network. This Pedestrian/Bike Plan is the direct result of a \$39,000 Cleaner Greener Communities Grant secured by the City in 2014. This plan has an overall goal of increasing walking and biking as a form of transit in the City. As a result, it will reduce vehicle use and improve the health of residents through regular exercise. Cortland is particularly well suited for this due to its size and compactness, as well as the fact that it is relatively flat. Cortland is home to City and County government offices and agencies, the Cortland Regional Medical Center, SUNY Cortland, a satellite of Tompkins- Cortland Community College, and major County employers, all with easy access to shopping and services. As a result, there is great potential for expanding walking and biking as a viable transportation option. Enhancing multi-modal transportation will make Cortland more desirable to younger generations that often relocate from other areas of upstate New York. A draft of the Ped-Bike Plan can be seen at www.cortland.org/success.



Southeast Greenway – The City's Comprehensive Plan includes the proposed development of a greenway through southeast Cortland. This proposed greenway/linear park would follow the old Lehigh Valley Railroad corridor, a strip of land that is long abandoned. This linear park would connect major nodes in the City, including Beaudry Park, Noss Technology Park, Dexter Park, Apex Tools, the Tioughnioga River, the Exit 11 Gateway Area, and Yaman Park. This proposed greenway, though conceptual, could spur reinvestment in struggling areas of the city, and physically connect many of the City's assets.

This application of creative quality of life improvements to downtown's transportation network is a testament to the City's commitment to undertake aggressive action to capitalize on its strengths.

Structure

Downtown Management and Commercial Development—The Downtown support structure is bolstered by the Cortland Downtown Partnership. This non-profit organization was founded in 2006 as a partnership between City government, SUNY Cortland, and the Downtown community. With a mission to advance commerce and culture within Downtown Cortland, the Downtown Partnership, along with downtown stakeholders, works to bring cultural and commercial vibrancy to the Downtown in all seasons. The Cortland Downtown Partnership is modeled after the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization. Design, Economic Restructuring, Promotion, and Organization are the focus of the organization as it works to develop the Cortland Downtown into a place that people want to work, live, and play. The Partnership has two full time employees, including the Downtown Manager, and operates the Cortland Business Innovation Center.

Impact of Non-Discrimination Laws

The City of Cortland is vigilant in its quest to ensure that everyone will get his or her fair chance in every aspect of City life. The City itself is an equal opportunity employer, and states that discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, marital status, disability or veteran status will not be tolerated. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment. The City has also adopted an Americans with Disabilities Policy. In addition, the City has a Fair Housing law that was passed in 1996, as well as Section 504 policies, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities conducted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In addition, the City also follows Section 3 of the HUD Act of 1968, which requires that recipients of certain HUD financial assistance, to the greatest extent feasible, provide job training, employment, and contracting opportunities for low income residents in connection with projects in their neighborhoods. The policies, enacted vigorously by the City, help to ensure that all residents and given the opportunity to participate fully in the community.

Smart Cities Innovation

The Smart Cities Innovation is one that the City of Cortland is working diligently toward achieving. The goal of a "Smart City" is to integrate information and communication technology such as telephone and wireless networks with what is referred to as the "Internet of Things," which is described as the inter-networking of devices, vehicles, buildings, and anything else that is outfitted with electronics, software, and network connectivity. This is done to allow the sharing of data and integration of these items to improve the efficiency of services in the city. Cortland has the availability of fiber optics, as well as a desire for brighter and more energy efficient lighting and buildings. Reduction of inefficient parking systems, optimization of traffic flow, and introduction of digital solutions to wayfinding and information dissemination will also result from the Smart Cities Initiative. These items are simply the building blocks toward making the City of Cortland the most technologically efficient City in Central New York. Currently, the City is completing an effort to instill Smart Water Meters throughout the community that can be read wirelessly. The City is also looking to install smart recycling bins that will wirelessly notify the DPW when they are full. As detailed herein, the City proposing to use DRI funding to provide the highest speed public WIFI currently available in NYS, and to install smart touch screen kiosks in the Downtown to bolster wayfinding efforts.

Eligibility for Age Friendly Community Certification

The City of Cortland is very diverse in age groups, with seasonal fluctuations dependent on the college population. In turn, the City prides itself in its accessibility, as well as its continuous cycle of improvements that serve the community regardless of age or limitations. The City encourages people of all ages to participate as stakeholders and members of City boards, and it prides itself on the all-inclusive environment that it has produced. The Downtown provides easy entry to most buildings, and is encouraging the investment of elevators into many Downtown building improvements. The City is a friendly community for all ages in policy, services, and support, and would be an ideal candidate for an Age Friendly Community Certification. The City is actively pursuing this Certification and encouraging the older population to participate in its incorporation.

Support for the Local Vision



Describe the public participation and engagement process conducted to support the DRI application, and the support of local leaders and stakeholders for pursuing a vision of downtown revitalization. Describe the commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to preparing and implementing a strategic investment plan. Identify an initial local lead for the program that will work with outside experts to convene a local DRI Planning Committee to oversee the plan.

To develop this DRI application, the City conducted an open community engagement process that has resulted in a unified vision for downtown.

- ✓ ***The development of this DRI application was guided by a steering committee of stakeholders lead by the Mayor that included local leadership, the business community, and others.***
- ✓ ***The Cortland Downtown Partnership, the central organization representing downtown businesses, was a chief contributor to this application.***
- ✓ ***The City held public meetings to encourage public input during the DRI process and conducted individual outreach to engage businesses owners and developers.***



Historic Downtown Cortland is the soul of the community. Its success is due to both the commitment of local leaders to foster improvement, and the residents' strong patronage of local businesses. The Cortland Downtown Partnership was established 10 years ago as a partnership between the City of Cortland, SUNY Cortland, the Cortland County Chamber of Commerce, and the Downtown Community. The City provides annual operating support to the Partnership. The City's and the community's commitment to downtown growth is best demonstrated by the successes and progress made over the years in the downtown. The projects and initiatives outlined in this DRI application, including, but not limited to, the City's Comprehensive Plan, the 2016 Downtown Market Analysis, the Pedestrian-Bike Plan, and others, were not developed in a vacuum, but through robust community-based planning efforts pioneered by local City leaders. As an example, an online survey conducted for the Downtown Market Analysis generated over 700 responses from City residents and local stakeholders. The Market Analysis also engaged the public and downtown community through multiple public meetings that presented an opportunity for public input and the exchange of ideas and information.

The City of Cortland, the Cortland County Business Development Corporation, and the Cortland Downtown Partnership all firmly believe that efforts to improve the downtown must commence at the ground level, with community input and support. As this application demonstrates, local leaders are adept at partnering with the private sector to leverage available resources to forge real transformative projects from ideas.

The City has conducted an open community engagement process that has resulted in a unified vision for downtown. The development of this DRI application was guided and informed by a steering committee of stakeholders including local leadership, the business community, SUNY Cortland, TC3, the Cortland Repertory Theater, the YWCA, the Seven Valleys Health Coalition, other local non-profits, and City residents. To prepare this nomination, recognizing that real projects are born from ideas, the City and the Downtown Partnership also held a public meeting on the DRI to gather additional input and discuss potential goals and projects. The cooperative relationship of all individuals and organizations, working to achieve a shared vision of the Downtown, speaks to the community's ability to collaborate in moving the Downtown forward and to develop and implement a Strategic Investment Plan that will maximize the impact of State funding, leverage significant private investment, and create hundreds of new jobs. Following the public forum, representatives from the City and the Downtown Partnership also conducted in person outreach within the downtown business community. The projects recognized in this DRI application are real, and are a direct result of that process.

Spurred by the excitement generated by this process, two TC3 professors, Dr. Christine Shanks and Dr. Christine Xaver, and a team of students, committed themselves to supporting the City's application. The team was responsible for the majority of the photography included in this submission. Furthermore, this group, with additional public support, captured extensive videography of Downtown Cortland and the surrounding area, and developed a video highlighting the important attributes of the Cortland community. The video was scored by Grammy award winning musician, Lonnie Parks. This video, perhaps more than any words, best demonstrates why Cortland is so well suited for investment through the DRI. The video, My Cortland, can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGmvUtexCxXlqFJcCbhOi-g>. The level of commitment of those who undertook this work speaks to the commitment, support, and pride Cortland residents have in their community.

Brian Tobin, Mayor of the City of Cortland, will be responsible for overseeing the development of the Strategic Investment Plan, with support from two partners, the Cortland Downtown Partnership and the Cortland County Business Development Corporation. In anticipation of moving forward quickly upon nomination, Mayor Tobin has established the following initial Steering Committee for development of Cortland's Downtown Investment Strategy:

Erik Bitterbaum, President, SUNY Cortland

David Duryea, Vice President of Finance and Management, SUNY Cortland

Adam Megivern, Executive Director, Cortland Downtown Partnership

Garry VanGorder, Executive Director, Cortland County Business Development Corporation

Sam Braine, Owner, Long Island Bagel

Charbell Karam, Owner, Pita Gourmet

Stephen Franco, President, Bailey Place Insurance

Chris Carrick, CNYRPDB

Mack Cook, Director of Finance and Administration, City of Cortland

Kerby Thompson, Executive Director, Cortland Repertory Theater

Mary Ann Discenza, Cortland County Legislature

Kelly Tobin, Executive Director, Cortland YMCA

Frank Kelly, Chair, City of Cortland Sustainability Committee

Bob Haight, Executive Director, Cortland County Chamber of Commerce

Jim Dempsey, Executive Director, Cortland County Convention and Visitor's Bureau

Machel Phelps, Director, Cortland Regional Sports Council

Lindy Glennon, Executive Director, Cortland County Community Action Program

It is anticipated that this Committee will be revised and updated following DRI nomination with input from New York State.



Cortland has created a culture of success and is ready, on Day 1, to catalyze this success and implement its forward-looking vision for the future of the Downtown.

- ✓ ***The Cortland Community is ready to advance projects that will transform the Downtown.***
- ✓ ***The City has developed clear strategies to guide its redevelopment efforts.***
- ✓ ***The City has laid the groundwork for success with the development of a market analysis, a traffic analysis, and other development plans to ensure that strategies are built on a solid footing.***
- ✓ ***An inter-related mix of private and public projects, both large and small have been identified. These project are ready to go and will transform the Downtown.***
- ✓ ***The City has created partnerships with the private, non profit, cultural, and educational sectors to fulfill its vision.***

The City of Cortland's second Downtown Revitalization Initiative submission is an even bolder approach to redefining the Cortland community as a premier destination, neighborhood, and workplace in New York State. If selected for funding, the initiative will have a transformative impact far beyond the City of Cortland and its urban core. Ongoing development of the City's strategy to expand the economic impact of the Downtown has been accelerated by the completion of feasibility and market studies, development of designs, the identification of transformative projects, and perhaps most importantly, the forging of partnerships between the public and private sectors to transform the vision to a reality.

The Downtown development strategy leverages four seasons of highly marketable offerings and destinations with diverse employment opportunities and living spaces. Cortland's proximity to numerous attractions and population centers via the Interstate 81 and 90 corridors contributes tremendous additional value to the community's livability. This effort is supported by the expertise and passion of our local team of economic development professionals at the City and County level including the Cortland Downtown Partnership; Cortland County BDC-IDA; Cortland County Convention Visitor's Bureau; Cortland County Chamber of Commerce; the arts community through the Cortland Arts Connection; and the public through the unwavering support of municipal government. The collaborative nature of Cortland's leadership has led to many successful partnerships on projects with New York State throughout the REDC process that have created a framework built upon improving the quality of life

and experience for residents, employees and visitors. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will advance commerce and culture by enhancing the unique commercial and cultural strengths of the community through creative place-making. With DRI funding, the City's 20-year vision will expand beyond repopulating and maintaining the current commercial building stock to creation of a 21st Century Downtown for a 21st Century population.

To succeed, City leaders recognize that their vision for the future of downtown must be rooted in sound economic strategies and realistic solutions. Cortland has laid the foundation for this success by commissioning a series of plans and studies to guide its efforts. Summarized below, all of these documents are available in their entirety at the City's DRI website, www.cortland.org/success.

Feasibility and Market Studies

Economic Market Analysis – The City hired Kennedy Smith, of the Clue Group, a national leader in downtown revitalization, to complete a data-driven economic analysis of the Downtown. This analysis highlighted economic trends, identified leakages, and enumerated opportunities for the Cortland economy. These included increased retail, particularly the development of a clothing sales cluster; downtown housing; and a downtown hotel(s). This analysis allowed the City to make informed decisions on economic development strategies rather than engage in the “guessing and hoping” that so often guides downtown revitalization efforts.

Two-Way Main Street Study – Cortland has had a one-way Main Street for the past 50 years. As part of its overall strategy to re-think and re-imagine City transportation networks, the City commissioned a detailed study on the feasibility and impacts of redesigning Main Street into a two-way thoroughfare. Funded in part with an ESD Technical Assistance Grant, this study was completed in early 2017 and focused on the traffic and economic impacts of changing traffic patterns. Although City leaders are still working with downtown stakeholders to determine the best implementation approach, this plan will be a guiding document as the community moves forward with its efforts to create a 21st Century Downtown, and will allow the community to make sound decisions.

Ped-Bike Plan – The re-imagining of Cortland's transportation network includes efforts to create a City where walking and biking is as much a transportation option as the automobile. With less than four square miles and a largely flat topography, the City is as suited to support alternative transportation as any City in Central New York. The Ped-Bike Plan, supported in part by Cleaner-Greener Communities funding, identified opportunities and constraints for the development of a robust alternative transportation system, including implementation of complete streets to support biking infrastructure and enhance connectivity of primary nodes in the City.

Northeast Gateway and Clinton Avenue Gateway Enhancement Initiative – Downtown and SUNY Cortland are located one mile from Interstate 81, Exit 11. This primary entrance into the City belies the character and sense of place of the rest of Cortland and the Downtown. This major initiative will produce a new entrance befitting of the community, and create a re-designed, environmentally innovative complete street corridor connecting the interstate with the Downtown and SUNY Cortland. Phase 1 of this plan will go to construction in late summer of 2017.

Revitalization Strategies

Based upon these examinations, the City's Comprehensive Plan, and the Downtown's inherent strengths and opportunities previously detailed, the community has focused its revitalization on three key strategies: 1) Build the Creative Economy; 2) Create a Complete Downtown Neighborhood; and 3) Re-imagine Infrastructure for the 21st Century.

1) Build the Creative Economy – Historic Downtown Cortland is the epicenter of creativity in Cortland County. Arts and entertainment sales are driving the local economy. Not only is the Creative Economy, including the arts, music, sports, and recreation, a direct economic driver, it is vital to creating the vibrancy and excitement needed to attract the newest generation of employees and entrepreneurs. Cortland has a strong foundation in the arts, particularly music and theater, and unparalleled roots in the sports and recreation tourism industry. Strengthening and building the Creative Economy will create significant new economic activity, attract new residents, and increase the quality of life for all residents.

2) Create a Complete Downtown Neighborhood – Supplementing Cortland's existing assets with DRI support, through consulting and capital, will accelerate development strategies and strengthen the community's attractiveness to potential residents. The alarmingly high rental rate in the community provides a real economic opportunity for resident creation through home ownership. The relatively low cost of homes, in comparison to adjacent communities, combined with big city amenities and attractions, makes Cortland an ideal location for all demographics. Factoring in unprecedented growth in downtown jobs through the McNeil Campus and ongoing opportunities at SUNY Cortland and Cortland Regional Medical Center, the downtown is poised to become the region's most dynamic neighborhood. The highly walkable nature of the City will only continue to enhance the vibrancy of surrounding neighborhoods. Creating a "complete neighborhood" in the downtown, with housing for all demographics, retail shopping, job availability, access to everyday goods and services, and attractive public spaces will create a true live, work, and play neighborhood that will propel the community onward.

3) Re-imagine Infrastructure for the 21st Century – The City of Cortland has taken a comprehensive approach to planning the redevelopment and expansion of the physical spaces that are critical to the continued growth of the local and regional economy. The redevelopment of downtown's public spaces focuses on enhanced accessibility through improved physical connections to improve the attractiveness to adjacent customer bases. Such improvements focus on quality electric, water, and sewer, and also on cutting edge, sustainable infrastructure such as multi-modal transportation networks and efficient, carbon-reducing energy sources. Furthermore, high-tech infrastructure and digital solutions, such as the creation of what would be the fastest public WIFI in New York State, will appeal to young adults and emerging companies. This focus will build upon Cortland's commitment to sustainability while setting it apart from other Upstate New York downtowns.



Transformative Projects

Guided by these three strategies, the Cortland community has a range of projects and initiatives that will transform Downtown Cortland from merely good, to great. The City realizes that while larger projects with significant leveraging are important to Downtown's transformation, small, focused investments can have a great impact as well. Below is a diverse series of identified public and private initiatives, both large and small, that will create an exciting, vibrant downtown unlike any in New York State.

Mixed Use Redevelopment and Creation of New Housing – Due to the proximity of SUNY Cortland to the Downtown, the development of market rate housing in and around the Downtown has historically lagged, given developers' preference for higher-return student housing. Concerted efforts by the City are turning that tide, with nearly 60 units of new market rate housing either under construction or due to begin construction this season. The renovation of an additional six buildings will continue this trend and further solidify Downtown as a residential neighborhood. The development of this housing is of vital importance, as the City must provide quality downtown housing to support the over 100 new employees anticipated to be hired at McNeil Insurance. In addition to DRI investment, all projects will be eligible for State and federal historic preservation tax credits. This valuable resource has been used successfully in Downtown Cortland to leverage millions in private investment. Since small tax credit projects can be difficult to undertake, the City will work to coordinate these projects so that the associated soft costs and technical expertise for the tax credits can be shared.

Identified redevelopment projects include:

One Main Mixed Use Development

Total Cost: \$750,000

DRI Investment: \$225,000

One Main Street is located at the "gateway" into the Downtown, across the street from the Gateway Block Redevelopment Area. A unique, two-story, 1920s Art Moderne building, it has long been covered with an unattractive false façade that has become a bane of Downtown. Removing this façade, and restoring the historic terra cotta that lies beneath has long been a goal of the City. The current owners are proposing to undertake this important façade renovation, and redevelop the long vacant second floor offices into two residential units. With long, strip windows overlooking the historic buildings on this intersection, and the proximity to McNeil Insurance, the new living units at 1 Main are destined to be a premier residential location.





**The Blue Mug-Recording Studio,
Live Venue, and Mixed Use
Development**

Total Cost: \$675,000

DRI Investment: \$202,500

Nationally-known recording artist Chris Merkley, www.chrismerkely.com, is proposing to relocate his Old Boy Records recording label and recording studio, www.oldboyrecords.com, into the heart of downtown. The mixed-use project will transform 77 Main Street, a vacant, historic building into a recording studio and six new apartments. A well known figure in the national music scene, he is purchasing a foreclosed Downtown building once housing a Jazz Club in order to relocate and expand his recording studio. The proposed Blue Mug Recording Studio is a highly anticipated and multi-faceted project that includes a multi-use and multi-media recording studio and live music venue. It will utilize an open floor design and moveable sound-isolation panels that can be arranged in different configurations. The space can be set up to accommodate a variety of A/V recording scenarios while functioning as a live music venue capable of capturing hi-fi multi-track audio and HD multi-cam video. The project also includes renovation of two upper floors to accommodate six units of new market rate housing. The new housing units will be marketed to musicians, but available to all. This project will significantly strengthen Downtown Cortland as the epicenter of the local music scene.



**Harold Block Mixed
Use Redevelopment**

Total Cost: \$1,100,000

DRI Investment: \$330,000

The historic Harold Block is prominently located at the corner of Main Street and Port Watson Street. This building is at one of the busiest intersections in the City. It is located diagonally from the City's iconic clock tower building, across from the Cortland Standard building, and it completes three of the four corners with historic brick buildings. The building has retail on the first floor. The former student housing on the upper floors will be converted to high-end market rate housing. The space will expand from 6 units to 9 units, and will have energy efficient upgrades, as well as include air conditioning and handicap accessibility.



**37-39 Port Watson
Mixed Use Development**

Total Cost: \$950,000

DRI Investment: \$285,000

The building at this location is one of the first buildings seen as you enter the downtown from the Port Watson gateway. It is a brick building that is in dire need of a façade upgrade. With retail on the bottom floor, and living space on the second floor, it is an ideal location for market rate apartments that are close to the downtown without being right on Main Street. This project includes exterior Façade improvements as well as renovation and remodeling of 9 apartments. Also discussed is the installation of an elevator to make the building handicap accessible.



Fiorentini Block Mixed Use Development

Total Cost: \$1,430,000

DRI Investment: \$429,000

This building at 22 Main Street is a three-story historic brick building that has retail on the first floor. The owners of this landmark building in the Downtown have proposed a residential development of 8 new and renovated market rate apartments. This location on Main Street is ideal for shops and restaurants, and gives tenants an ideal opportunity to take advantage of all that the City Cortland has to offer.



Terrace at 100 Main - Rooftop Dining and Residential Renovation Project

Total Cost: \$1,000,000

DRI Investment: \$300,000

The owners of 96 -104 Main Street are successful restaurateurs, with five eateries in the greater Cortland Area. They are proposing to install a new elevator that will service all three buildings and create a unique rooftop dining area to support their cluster of three restaurant/pubs at this block of Main Street. With expansive views of Main Street, the majestic County Courthouse, and the hills of Cortland beyond, this project will create a unique dining experience in the area. The residential portion of this project involves the creation of one 1,600 square-foot market rate apartment. Additional investment will include accessibility improvements, exterior renovations, and elevator access.





Gateway Block Redevelopment – The “Gateway” into Downtown Cortland is the intersection of Main Street, Clinton Avenue, and Groton Avenue (NY 222). Four inter-related projects have been identified for the northwest corner of this block, and include in-fill construction on the City’s Groton Avenue Parking Lot. The physical density of these projects as shown in the graphic below, will transform this section of the downtown. They include the following four projects:



Flagship Hotel
Total Cost: \$6,500,000
DRI Investment: \$2,000,000

A major factor in the continuing redevelopment of Downtown Cortland will be the construction of a new Downtown flagship hotel to accommodate visitors to the college, local sporting events, the hospital, and the general community who desire to be close to downtown during their stay. The hotel will be constructed on Main Street, replacing a non-conforming one-story structure. The project will also encompass a portion of the City-owned Groton Avenue Parking lot, consistent with the City’s goals to better utilize land in the downtown. Currently, two low-budget hotels serve the Downtown. The project will upgrade downtown’s overnight accommodation offerings, create jobs, and bring even more people into the district. The hotel will include limited meeting/conference facilities for small meetings. This new development will account for more than \$4.5 million in private investment, create 45 new jobs, and support existing downtown businesses. The City will work with the private developer to ensure the building meets a minimum “Gold” LEED rating.

Downtown Pocket Park and Playground
Total Cost: \$200,000
DRI Investment: \$150,000

Public input during the DRI development process indicated a desire among the public to provide quality open spaces for families within the downtown. The City has selected a City-owned space located between the Groton Avenue Parking Lot and Main Street, and adjacent to the proposed infill hotel, for a new pocket park. Surrounded on three sides by structures, the park will provide a shaded respite from the bustle of downtown and a protected area for families and children to gather and relax. The park will include landscaping, a water feature, seating, and a small playground suitable for toddlers and young, school aged children.



Luxury Student Housing

Total Cost: \$20,000,000

DRI Investment: NONE

Although this project is not proposed for DRI funding, it does relate to the other investments that are occurring on this block, and is included herein to provide context. SUNY Cortland is coordinating with a developer to construct a luxury student housing development along Groton Avenue over the northern end of the existing parking lot. The first floor will provide retail and commercial office space. The project will achieve a minimum "Gold" LEED certification. The project reestablishes the Groton Avenue streetscape that has been lost due to fire and demolition. Although an important investment in the Downtown, the project does not require DRI investment.

Parking Structure

Total Cost: \$2,250,000

DRI Investment: \$1,500,000

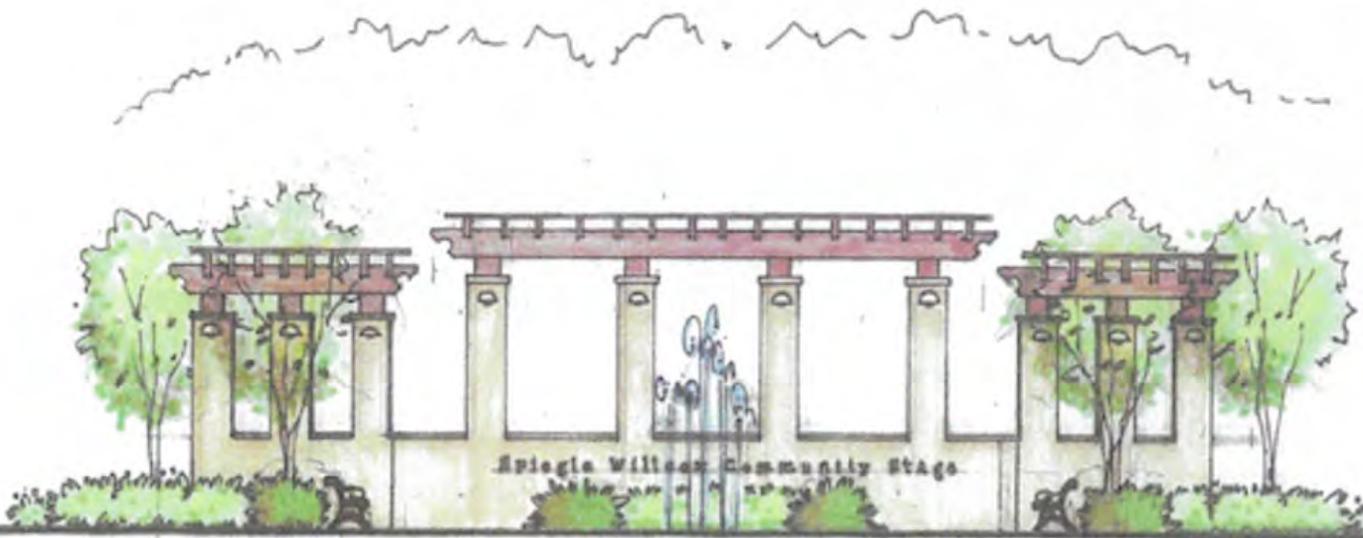
The aforementioned hotel, luxury student housing project, and pocket park, will result in the loss of a substantial number of surface parking spaces in the City's primary parking lot. They will also create new parking demand of approximately 200 spaces. To support the new development, the City will construct a parking structure over the remaining land of the Groton Avenue Parking Lot. The new ramp will connect directly to the hotel and the new housing complex. Together, these four projects will intensify the land use in this quadrant of downtown and spur future high-end investment.

Spiegle Wilcox Performing Arts Venue

Total Cost: \$1,400,000

DRI Investment: \$200,000

This \$1.4 million downtown performance venue will be located in the historic Courthouse Park. The project is partially funded by a private donor in the name of Spiegle Wilcox, a nationally renowned jazz trombonist from Cortland, and will provide a state of the art performance venue. Its location in the park will conservatively accommodate 2,000 attendees. The new venue will provide for the expansion of existing events such as the Arts and Wine Festival, the Pumpkin Festival, the Thursday Music in the Park Series, and the Friday Main Street Music Series, all of which draw tens of thousands of visitors to the downtown each summer. As part of the Cortland Arts Connection, SUNY Cortland has also committed to exploring the use of this new venue for its annual Spring Fling Concert. With recent performances by national touring artists such as Wiz Khalifa, Kendrick Lamar, O.A.R., and The Frey, reimagining of Cortland's Spring Fling into a town and gown type event is a key strategy to enhance the cultural offerings that attract up-and-coming generations.



Conceptual Sketch - Contemporary Style

View From Church Street



Downtown Movie Theatre

Total Cost: \$2,600,000

DRI Investment: \$600,000

The City of Cortland has been exploring the concept of a downtown movie theatre with a national movie theatre chain. Introducing a movie theatre into the downtown will provide another arts and cultural anchor in the urban core and increase downtown visitation to support complimentary eateries, boutiques, and social venues. The project has been validated by overwhelming support highlighted through the DRI's community engagement and outreach efforts. Further, the movie theatre project fills an entertainment sales void that was identified in the recently completed Downtown Market Analysis. With an anticipated \$2.6 million budget, the project could leverage the use of existing city owned surface parking for new infill development or contemplate the acquisition and adaptive reuse of targeted underutilized or blighted properties of interest.



Arts Alley

Total Cost: \$250,000

DRI Investment: \$200,000

Cortland Repertory Theater (CRT) is located on Port Watson Street, around the corner from Cortland's "Restaurant District." In order to fully leverage the opportunities presented by the presence of CRT, a greater connectivity between these two areas must be created. The City is proposing to transform a dark, littered, unused alleyway into a unique urban environment to provide this connectivity in an unexpected way. To be designed by local artists, the "Arts Alley" will be an eclectic space with decorative paving, wall murals, creative lighting, and suspended artist installations. It is envisioned that the space will become an attraction in its own right.

Local Food Market Expansion

Total Cost: \$500,000

DRI Investment: \$200,000

The Local Food Market is a City success story. Opening several years ago on the north side of Downtown, the natural food store has quickly become a staple of community living. The Whole Heart Café, located within the market, is a popular spot for healthy dining. Due to its success, the Local Food Market is proposing an expansion project that will create additional, needed parking, and construction of an attached greenhouse for on-site, year round production of vegetables. This will strengthen Downtown's position as a center for locally grown, healthy eating options.



Cortland Beer Company Expansion

Total Cost: \$2,500,000

DRI Investment: \$550,000

Now in its 7th year of operation, Cortland Beer Company has seen tremendous growth at its original downtown location. The facility has produced craft beer under its NYS Farm Brewery License, with locally grown ingredients, since 2010. Beer production includes over a dozen year-round styles and a mixture of one-of-a-kind limited brews. The tasting room offers numerous beers on tap at all times and has become a local attraction and destination for beer enthusiasts near and far. Production levels also accommodate a canning line and keg sales to meet the growing on premise and distribution needs. New this year, the facility now includes a distillery, producing vodka, whiskey, moonshine, gin and apple brandy.



Having outgrown its current location in the Downtown, Cortland Beer Company has begun to explore its options for expansion. Partnering with NY State and the City of Cortland, an opportunity exists through the DRI to allow for the expansion of Cortland Beer Company to meet growing point of sale and distribution market demands, while remaining in the Downtown. There are feasible options in the Downtown for both infill development, as well as adaptive reuse of existing infrastructure, to accommodate the expansion project. If selected as a DRI winning community, Cortland Beer Company's expansion would offer an exciting private investment opportunity for an additional partner into the multi-million dollar expansion.

1890 House Museum - Carriage House Renovation

Total Cost: \$1,500,000

DRI Investment: \$450,000

Located at the main southern entrance to Downtown, this grand limestone mansion, built by successful industrialist Chester F. Wickwire, is a symbol of the grandeur of the Victorian and Gilded ages in Cortland. The 1890 House Museum is proposing to renovate its 4,000 square foot Carriage House and Grounds for use as a public venue space, in collaboration with the Cortland Arts Connection. Renovation of the Carriage House and Grounds will allow the facility to expand to accommodate spring, summer, and fall events such as theater and music, family and community events, weddings, farmer's and craft markets, and other museum events. The \$1.5 million project will include a new roof, new floors, window and door repair, foundation and wall repair, handicapped accessibility renovations, new sidewalks, and complete façade restoration. The 1890 House Museum is an iconic fixture in the downtown, and these renovations will not only preserve the historic structure, but will maximize the Museum's cultural and entertainment contribution to the City's urban core.



21st Century Downtown Infrastructure

Total Cost: \$650,000

DRI Investment: \$560,000

In order to create a modern Downtown that will appeal to the next generation of residents and employees, and to further Cortland's goal of being a leader in sustainability, Cortland is proposing a series of initiatives to create "infrastructure" for the next century. These include:

- 1) A unique, hybrid signage and digital wayfinding and information system that will coordinate with a City-wide Ped/Bike wayfinding system being developed by the Seven Valleys Health Coalition. The kiosks will provide digital mapping/directions and information on the Downtown, along with a voice feature for the visually impaired and electronic device charging stations.
- 2) A state of the art downtown WIFI system via the installation of ten (10) Meraki Mx84 Units tied to the existing fiber optic cable network. With a previously unattainable speed of 2.5Gig (up and down) this network will provide the highest speed WIFI in New York State.
- 3) An alternative energy grant fund to further the goal of making Downtown Cortland a leader in sustainable energy production, generating a greater percentage of energy from renewable sources than any other downtown in New York. A \$200,000 fund is proposed to provide incentive grants up to \$10,000 per building (20 buildings) for installation of rooftop solar and/or wind energy. The program will leverage existing NYSERDA funding as well as leverage private resources. While not proposed for funding under the DRI, the City is also exploring the potential of generating geo-thermal energy under City parking lots for a shared Downtown Geo-Thermal heating/cooling system.
- 4) Retrofitting existing street lighting with PoE powered and controlled LED street lighting. This will reduce energy costs while providing greater control of downtown lighting, including dimming and color control.
- 5) Installation of four Electric Vehicle Charging Stations to support the next generation of vehicles.



Main Street Infrastructure and Streetscaping

Total Cost: \$2,500,000

DRI Investment: \$1,500,000

Cortland has had a one-way Main Street for the past 50 years. As part of its overall strategy to re-think and re-imagine City transportation networks, the City commissioned a detailed study on the feasibility and impacts of redesigning the Main Street transportation network. This study was completed in early 2017 and focused on the traffic and economic impacts of changing traffic patterns. Although City leaders are still working with downtown stakeholders to determine the best implementation approach, the City is cognizant that downtown accessibility needs to be addressed and that the downtown streetscape should be re-imagined. To position the downtown transportation infrastructure more in line with the recently completed Ped-Bike plan, the City is proposing a \$2.5 million transportation and streetscape project that will implement components of the Main Street transportation study and Ped-Bike Plan. The overarching goal of the project is to increase traffic safety and accessibility to the downtown in order to support the vast array of commercial offerings along Main Street, while at the same time, promoting walking and biking as an alternate transportation option and further beautifying the downtown.

Northeast Gateway and Clinton Avenue Corridor Enhancement Initiative

Total Cost: \$12,000,000

DRI Investment: \$2,000,000

This initiative advances one of the major goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan and is a keystone in transforming Cortland's image. The goal of the project is to improve the poor first impression created by the City's gateway at Exit 11, off I-81, and create a stronger connectivity between this highway commercial area, the historic Downtown and SUNY Cortland. The contemporary design concepts are meant to showcase Cortland as a progressive 21st Century destination. Phase 1, funded with a Transportation Enhancement Program grant, involves streetscape improvements focused on the Exit 11 area and the Clinton/River/Pomeroy intersection at the Tioughnioga River. Phase 2 is a Complete Street with green infrastructure that includes the reconstruction of Clinton Avenue, to Downtown, with bike lanes, vegetated medians, and energy-efficient streetlights, along with sustainable storm water management techniques such as new trees, permeable pavement, and bio-retention basins. The City has leveraged more than \$6 million in grants and loans of the estimated \$10 to \$12 million cost of the project from sources such as EFC, the Green Innovation Grant Program, the Transportation Enhancement Program, LWRP, and CDBG public infrastructure funds. The City is currently pursuing additional funding through the Climate Smart Program and is investigating the use of a TIF district to complete the project. The project will physically transform the entrance to the City and the Downtown, provide connectivity between commercial nodes, and further the City's strong commitment to sustainability and resiliency. Complete concept plans can be found at www.cortland.org/success.





Branding

Total Cost: \$100,000

DRI Investment: \$90,000

In order to fully capitalize on the transformative projects proposed for the Cortland Downtown Revitalization Initiative, the City is proposing to develop a fresh branding program to better market the “new” 21st Century downtown. The City will hire a professional marketing team to create a new Downtown brand and infuse that branding throughout the downtown and various marketing campaigns, from ads, to web content, to wayfinding kiosks, and downtown design. The cohesive branding will ensure that Cortland realizes the benefits of its investments.

DRI Job Connection/CBIC Programming

Total Cost: \$360,000

DRI Investment: \$295,000

Downtown’s economy provides a variety of jobs from entry level to skilled professionals. Most importantly, it provides a unique opportunity for the ambitious to create their own profession, due to the downtown’s commitment to foster an environment that supports entrepreneurial efforts. The City is proposing two inter-related projects to maximize the positive impacts of DRI investment

- 1) The City will partner with Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) to develop certificate level training specific to the jobs that are being created in the Downtown, including insurance, hospitality, etc. This partnership will ensure that local residents have the requisite skills to fill employment opportunities to be created via the DRI. A letter from TC3 is attached.
- 2) The City will also partner with the Cortland Downtown Partnership to provide programming for the Cortland Business Innovation Center. The \$1.7M Innovation Center is in its final phase of construction and will be fully operational by late fall 2017. DRI funding will allow the facility to develop outreach and support efforts in line with regional and national models to increase the number and quality of startup businesses, increase success rates, support growth of new and existing businesses, and develop succession planning for aging businesses. Servicing the adjacent 38 Arts building with a shared elevator, the creativity deployed in the incubator will also be shared through the expansion of programming to address the commercialization of the arts.



Potential DRI Investment Summary

Project		Total Cost	DRI	Other Public	Other Private
One Main Street Mixed Use	■	750,000	225,000	0	525,000
Blue Mug Recording Studio/Venue	■	675,000	202,500	10,000	472,500
Harold Block Mixed Use	■	1,100,000	330,000	0	770,000
37-39 Port Watson Mixed Use	■	950,000	285,000	0	665,000
Fiorentini Block Mixed Use	■	1,430,000	429,000	0	1,001,000
Terrace at 100 Main/rooftop dining	■	1,000,000	300,000	0	700,000
Flagship Hotel	■	6,500,000	2,000,000	1,000,000	3,000,000
Pocket Park and Playground	■ ■	200,000	150,000	50,000	0
DT Parking Structure	■	2,250,000	1,500,000	750,000	0
Luxury Student Housing Building	■	20,000,000	0	0	0
Spiegle Wilcox Performing Arts Venue	■	1,400,000	200,000	1,000,000	200,000
Downtown Movie Theater	■	2,600,000	600,000	600,000	1,400,000
Arts Alley	■ ■	250,000	200,000	25,000	25,000
Local Food Market Expansion	■	500,000	200,000	0	300,000
Cortland Beer Company Expansion	■	2,500,000	550,000	0	1,950,000
1890 House Carriage House Redevelop.	■	1,500,000	450,000	0	1,050,000
Hybrid Wayfinding and Info System	■ ■ ■	195,000	155,000	20,000	20,000
High Speed Downtown WIFI	■ ■	60,000	30,000	10,000	20,000
Alternative Energy Grant Program	■	400,000	200,000	100,000	100,000
Smart Street Lighting	■ ■	250,000	175,000	50,000	25,000
Solar Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	■	125,000	50,000	75,000	0
Main Street Infrastructure/Streetscaping	■	2,500,000	1,500,000	1,000,000	0
Clinton Avenue Gateway Project	■	12,000,000	2,000,000	10,000,000	0
Downtown Branding		100,000	90,000	10,000	0
Job Connection Programming	■ ■ ■	100,000	90,000	0	0
Innovation Center Programming	■	150,000	100,000	50,000	0
TOTAL		59,485,000	12,011,500	14,750,000	12,223,500

Key

Creative Economy: ■

Downtown Neighborhood: ■

Public Infrastructure: ■

Administrative Capacity



The City is well versed in the development of publicly funded programs and development projects that leverage private investment.

- ✓ **Current City leadership has over 50 years of combined experience with community development and grants management.**
- ✓ **The City of Cortland has successfully administered numerous state and federal funded grant programs including Community Development Block Grants, New York Main Street grants, RESTORE NY grants, HOME Grants, Affordable Housing Corporation grants, State Archives grants, Environmental Protection Fund grants, Urban and Community Forestry grants, and others.**
- ✓ **The Cortland Downtown Partnership is an asset to the City and has assisted with the administration of numerous grant programs to revitalize the downtown over the past 10 years**

Brian Tobin has been Mayor of the City of Cortland for three terms (2 years each) and was a member of the City Council for two prior terms. During that time, Mayor Tobin has spearheaded numerous redevelopment initiatives in the Downtown and throughout the City. Throughout that process, Mayor Tobin has been charged with the oversight of numerous grant programs with investments totaling in the “tens-of-millions” of dollars. In addition to the Mayor, the City Director of Administration and Finance, Mack Cook, has significant experience overseeing community redevelopment initiatives and grant programs. Mr. Cook has been involved in municipal administration, including grant program and development oversight, for over 40 years.

Bolstering the City’s administrative capacity is its association with the Cortland Downtown Partnership. The Partnership was formed in 2006 and was born out of the City of Cortland’s desire to revitalize the downtown. The Cortland Downtown Partnership is modeled after the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization. Design, Economic Restructuring, Promotion, and Organization are key initiatives that the Downtown Partnership embraces as it works to develop the Downtown into a place in which people want to work, live, and play. The Partnership has played an important role in assisting the City with the administration of numerous grant programs to revitalize the downtown. Financially, the Downtown Partnership is largely supported by the City of Cortland and grant funding earmarked for administration.



The City of Cortland has administered many grants from numerous sources over the years, often concurrently, including Community Development Block Grants, New York Main Street grants, RESTORE NY grants, HOME Grants, Affordable Housing Corporation grants, State Archives grants, Environmental Protection Fund grants, Urban and Community Forestry grants, and others. The City is currently administering a New York Main Street grant program to renovate downtown buildings; CDBG and HOME housing programs to rehabilitate housing near the downtown; a Brownfield Opportunities Area program to craft redevelopment strategies for the City's historic industrial neighborhoods; and has creatively combined a CDBG infrastructure grant with funds from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, and other sources, to fund enhancements connecting the downtown to Interstate 81.

The City has demonstrated that it is well versed in the oversight and administration of state and federal funded grant programs and is, therefore, well positioned to maximize the impact of the DRI funding once the City is nominated by the Central New York Regional Economic Development Council and the Governor's Office. The manner in which the City has utilized past public investment to leverage millions in private dollar investments should be the measuring stick by which its future success can be gauged with the assistance of Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding.





In addition to the information previously provided, there are several other issues that set Cortland apart in securing Central New York's nomination for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative:

Maintenance of a Strong Housing Market – Cortland has worked hard to ensure that the local housing market is well maintained, that it meets the needs of existing and new residents, and that all have decent, safe, and affordable housing. Cortland has regularly leveraged State and federal housing resources, including AHC, HOME, and CDBG to address various of housing issues, including owner-occupied housing rehabilitation, rental rehabilitation, and existing and new construction homeownership initiatives. It has partnered with other agencies and non-profits, including Housing Visions, Christopher House, Catholic Charities, and Access to Independence to develop affordable housing that meets the needs of all residents. City leaders also realize that a healthy City must include housing for all income levels and backgrounds. With that in mind, the City supports SUNY Cortland's Live-In Cortland Initiative designed to entice College faculty and staff to live in the City within walking distance of the campus and downtown. Cortland has also adopted section 421 m of the Real Property Tax law to provide a tax incentive for the redevelopment of Downtown mixed use buildings for housing. Lastly, the Common Council has allocated local funds to create a Moderate Income Home Repair Program to provide small, deferred loans to homeowners that are not eligible for the City's low income programs. The program focuses on assisting property owners with exterior repairs that will enhance the character of the neighborhood. All of these efforts help to strengthen the local housing stock and make Cortland more attractive to outside investment.

Underserved Populations – Downtown's economy provides a variety of jobs from entry level to skilled professionals. Nevertheless, the City of Cortland has a poverty rate of just over 21% and 48.03% of City residents live at or below 80% of US median income. Because of the City's hard work, these numbers have dropped in the past 24 months, an encouraging trend. However, Cortland does not consider its lower income residents a detriment to downtown success, but rather believes that it must work to ensure that its community and economic development efforts "lifts all boats". Cortland will have failed if it creates a strong downtown full of shops, restaurants, and young professionals living in loft apartments if its poorest residents do not have an opportunity to partake in the economic growth of the community.

Therefore, from the first stages of preparation for this DRI nomination, representatives for the disadvantaged and underserved were included in the planning process. While new jobs created in the Downtown will be available to a wide range of individuals, there are other barriers to long-term employment, including housing, training, and childcare. Creating partnerships between the County's employment agency, non-profit agencies, and Cortland's educational institutions such as BOCES, TC3, and SUNY Cortland is important to eliminating these barriers and ensuring that the success of the DRI provides opportunities for individuals to pull themselves from poverty. Two specific job training/connections programs have been identified as potential DRI investment opportunities. Other opportunities include requirements for local hiring for jobs created under the DRI, establishing pay floors for DRI-created jobs to ensure a living wage, or working to ensure proper, affordable day care is available. The City looks forward to working with New York State to ensure that all Cortland residents benefit from the investments made under the DRI.

Commitment to Sustainability – As detailed throughout this application, Cortland Community is deeply committed to creating a sustainable local community. From supporting local urban farms and organic grocers, to protecting the City's sole source aquifer which supplies to drinking water to the area, to developing complete streets to increase alternative transportation, to green stormwater management, to supporting energy conservation and creating alternative energy generation at its wastewater treatment facility, Cortland has quietly become a State leader in sustainability. The City is a participant in the Central New York Regional Planning Board's Climate Change Innovation Program. They are a Climate Smart Community; they have prepared a Greenhouse Gas Inventory; they have adopted a Climate Action Plan; and they are an Energy Smart Community. The City participates in the Energize New York Program, in the Solarize CNY program with the Regional Planning Board, and is a PACE community. They are also implementing sustainable practices at the City Wastewater Treatment Facility, including gas-to-energy technology with the goal of reducing grid electrical consumption to zero. In 2016, they became the first municipality in Central New York to participate in the Community Choice Aggregation Program recently approved by the PSC. They have undertaken studies to with the Fish and Wildlife Federation to identify more progressive and green technologies to address stormwater runoff to deal with urban flooding and improve the water quality of the Tioughnioga River. Lastly, new, progressive LEED-ND zoning has been developed, as has a Ped-Bike Master Plan.

In addition to these actions, the City completed the Tioughnioga River Urban Headwaters Action Plan. With funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the City has taken their plans for the Clinton Avenue Corridor and other areas of the City and identified green infrastructure technologies to store, treat, and infiltrate stormwater runoff and reduce impacts to the Tioughnioga River. These opportunities will be taken into account as Clinton Avenue is developed, will aid in the protection and enhancement of the Tioughnioga River, and will be utilized in other City projects.

It is the City's goal to continue this leadership in sustainability through the DRI, with the lofty goal of making Downtown Cortland one of the most "green" downtowns in New York State. As part of the development of its Investment Strategy, it is looking to explore options such rooftop solar, solar powered electrical vehicle charging stations, shared geo-thermal, shared restaurant composting, green stormwater management, and programs to support walking and biking as primary transportation modes, rather than simply leisure activities.

In addition to "doing what's right" in regard to the environment, Cortland sees its sustainable principles as an economic development driver, and a tool to attract new residents, employees, and businesses.

Qing Xaing Lin
43 Homer ave
Cortland, NY 13045

6/9/2017

Mayor Brian Tobin
City of Cortland
25 Court Street
Cortland, NY 13045

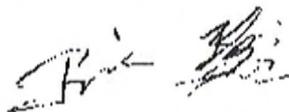
Dear Mayor Tobin:

As the owner of One Main Street, I am very excited about the City's Downtown Revitalization Initiative application. Downtown has made great strides in recent years, and we are optimistic about the potential impact on our investment.

We are proposing to renovate the second floor of a recently occupied restaurant to accommodate 2 new residential units and undertake façade renovations. The building was chronically vacant for many years but with seed funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative this mixed-use project will make the building 100 percent operational.

I am looking forward to working with the City and the Cortland community to fully realize Downtown Cortland's tremendous potential.

Sincerely,





3336 Rte 215 Cortland, NY
Chris@OldBoyRecords.com

Date: 6/6/17

Mayor Brian Tobin
City of Cortland
25 Court Street
Cortland, NY 13045

Dear Mayor Tobin:

As an interested buyer of 77 Main Street, I am enthusiastically supportive of the City of Cortland's Downtown Revitalization Initiative application. As a local musician and life long resident of the county I have seen a significant level of growth in last decade.

I am proposing to create a music studio venue that will provide audio and video recordings for live or private performances and recording sessions. My business model includes bringing the established Old'Boy record label to the first floor of the building and renovating the upper floors to create market rate housing. With the support of the city and incentives from the state I look forward to growing the label and the venue in to a regional destination.

Sincerely,

Chris Merkley

6/5/2017

Mayor Brian Tobin
City of Cortland
25 Court Street
Cortland, NY 13045

Dear Mayor Tobin:

Barry Warren and I are the owners of the property located on 22,24 26 Main Street in Cortland. We are looking forward to the City of Cortland's selection as the Central New York's Downtown Revitalization Initiative award winner. Over the last several years, downtown has seen significant improvements with rapid growth.

Due to the improvements we are seeing in the downtown economy, we would like to upgrade our existing apartments into higher quality units and build out currently vacant space into market rate units. It is anticipated that the development would be a total of approx. 8 units on the second and third floors.

We are extremely excited about this grant's potential to create an incentive to make this a viable project and hope we will be included in the program.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael E. Niswender & Barry E. Warren". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Michael E Niswender & Barry E Warren, members

Rent-Rite Apartments, LLC

PO Box 505

Little York, NY 13087

607-423-4431

6/9/2017

Mayor Brian Tobin
City of Cortland
25 Court Street
Cortland, NY 13045

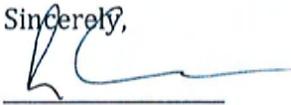
Dear Mayor Tobin:

As the owner of 37-39 Port Watson Street I am looking forward to the opportunity from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative to work with the City of Cortland and New York State on developing my building.

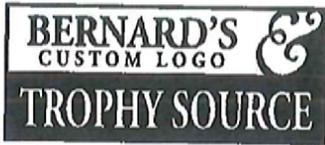
The project will remodel 9 apartments into market rate housing and upgrade all features of the historic building into modern conveniences. Façade work will restore the building to its landmark status and help expand the rapid development downtown.

If selected for funding I am forward to working with the state and the city to develop this building into a regional example of modern luxury in a historic building.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Gallow", written over a horizontal line.

Paul Gallow



6/6/2017

Mayor Brian Tobin
City of Cortland
25 Court Street
Cortland, NY 13045

Dear Mayor Tobin:

As the owner of 107-111 Main Street, I look forward to the opportunity to partner with New York State through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. 107-111 Main Street has been in my family for almost 40 years and is one of the oldest original buildings in downtown Cortland. It was built in 1830 and is a historic landmark. Without this partnership we will not be able to move into the future with the below renovations that is needed in today's market. We recognize the positive trend of the downtown economy and we are eager to invest in the city's future as we have been in business in downtown Cortland for over 75 years.

If state incentives are able to be leverage the project will convert and expand 6 housing units into 9 market rate units. Numerous upgrades including energy efficiencies, HVAC and accessibility will be made.

I am very enthusiastic supporters of the City's application and look forward to the potential to work with New York State on developing this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven M. Wineburg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Steven M. Wineburg



The 1890 House Museum

ADDRESS

37 Tompkins Street
Cortland, NY 13045

CONTACT

607-756-7551
the1890house@gmail.com
the1890house.org

PROUD MEMBER OF

Cortland Chamber of Commerce
Museum Association of New York
Small Museum Association
American Alliance of Museums
American Association of State and
Local Historians

June 7th, 2017

Mayor Brian Tobin
City of Cortland
25 Court Street
Cortland, NY 13045

Dear Mayor Tobin,

The 1890 House Museum is supportive of the City of Cortland's Downtown Revitalization Initiative application. We are looking forward to seeing the good work of moving Downtown into the future.

The 1890 House Museum is looking to revitalize our 4,000 square foot Carriage House and Grounds for the use of a public venue space. The goal of this project would be to continue renovating our historic Carriage House and Grounds so that spring, summer and fall events such as theater and music, family and community days, farmer's markets, and museum events can be held on the property. The museum is working to better build its outreach as a Cortland landmark and this project would help achieve that goal.

The museum is looking to split the work into two different stages. The following items are part of this project.

Stage one:

New roof, New Floors (First Floor), Window repair and new windows in back half, Foundation and wall repairs, Ramp for rear of building, Walkway from ramp to front of building, Painting the outside

Stage two:

At least one small bathroom inside, New floors (Second Floor), Stair repairs and possible additions, HVAC system, Finish fencing in the backyard

All of these improvements will go through the Historic District Commission and will be done to preservation standards. All attempts will be made to keep the work done to local business, thus helping boost the Cortland community.

The benefits of this project for the community are that they will gain a new space for events. Seed funding from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will make this project economically feasible.

The museum looks forward to partnering with other cultural institutions, the City and Cortland community to fully realize Downtown Cortland's tremendous potential.

Sincerely,



Meg Hutchins, Museum Director

Your House, Your History



CENTERSTATE
CORPORATION FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

June 13, 2017

Honorable Brian Tobin
City of Cortland Mayor
City Hall
25 Court Street
Cortland NY 13045

Dear Mayor Tobin,

On behalf of CenterState CEO, I am writing to express our support for the City's application to New York State for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative program. I appreciate the effort the City of Cortland has made to secure public input and information from stakeholders.

Investing in our region's centers of commerce, tourism and social fabric are critical components of the CNY REDC's plan to jumpstart economic growth in our upstate communities. The presence of vibrant downtowns, which is the core aim of Cortland's application, anchor's a communities strategy to attract new business and talent. All of the projects put forward here can lead to an increase in jobs, tax base, and improve the competitiveness of our regional manufacturers and employers.

CenterState CEO will be happy to work with you to implement these projects and will work closely with our partner - the Cortland County Business Development Corporation to assist in these important initiatives.

Thank you for your leadership, time, and energy to advance this proposal.

Sincerely,

Robert Simpson
President & CEO

June 7, 2017

Robert Simpson, CNY REDC Chair
Central New York Regional Economic Development Council
Syracuse, New York

Dear CNY REDC Representatives,

I am very pleased to provide this letter of endorsement for the City of Cortland's Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) proposal on behalf of the State University of New York College at Cortland (SUNY Cortland). The proposed DRI offers significant opportunities to create a vibrant downtown to improve the quality of life of our community. This will greatly enhance the college's ability to attract and retain high quality faculty, staff and students.

As a campus approaching its 150th year anniversary, we are an anchor employer with over 1,000 employees that contribute to the City's tax base by supporting retail, restaurants, recreation, housing and transportation. Our enrollment is just over 7,000 with students in 68 academic degree programs that complement all sectors of employment and economic growth in Cortland.

SUNY Cortland's demographics have transitioned similar to other parts of the country. As Baby Boomers transition to retirement, the College has hired 113 new faculty in the last 5 years, many seeking to live close to campus in professional loft apartments. Our analysis also shows they desire access to a vibrant downtown for shopping and dining. In addition, these new residents seek opportunities for social interaction and multicultural environments within the City's core corridor. As part of our commitment to this, we developed a program that funds up to \$4000 in closing costs/down payments for faculty/staff who choose to live near the campus and downtown.

This community offers tremendous opportunities for growth. As a coalition partner, SUNY Cortland can make significant contributions by collaborating with the City on its economic renewal initiatives. As an example, our Economics Department started an entrepreneurship program in 2012 to offer coursework, student involvement with startups and internships with Downtown businesses. That effort contributed to the Cortland Downtown Partnerships' opening of the Cortland Business Innovation Center. SUNY Cortland will continue to collaborate with Downtown and maintain current business needs analysis for community planning which can dovetail with the revitalization efforts of the DRI.

As the city's largest employer, we are proud to partner with the City on this application. A strong and vibrant downtown is critical to the community's quality of life and will support the recruitment and retention of SUNY Cortland students and personnel who are proud to call Cortland home.

Our point of contact is David Duryea, Vice President for Finance and Management. You can reach him at (607) 753-2211 or by email at david.duryea@cortland.edu.

Sincerely,



Erik Bitterbaum
President

June 13, 2017

Mayor Brian Tobin
City of Cortland
25 Court Street
Cortland, NY 13045

Dear Mayor Tobin,

I am pleased to lend my enthusiastic support for the city's application for Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) funding.

Our business reach is nationwide but our home is in downtown Cortland. As we recruit young talent for our growing team and host employees and industry specialists for sometimes weeks at a time, it is more important than ever that our downtown presents itself as attractive, vibrant and vital.

McNeil & Co. is doing our part with a decision to invest millions of dollars into a business expansion project that will allow us to create many new, well-paying professional jobs in the downtown area in the years ahead. The city is doing its part with the DRI plan to address the need for quality housing that our current and future employees will find attractive.

I wish you the best of luck with the grant application and look forward to exciting days ahead in downtown Cortland as an infusion of \$10 million into the district would have untold benefits not just for McNeil & Co., but for the entire community.

Sincerely,



Daniel F. McNeil
President



37 Church Street, Cortland, NY 13045 • info@cortlandbusiness.com • 607.756.5005

June 9, 2017

Robert Simpson
Danielle Laraque-Arena
Co-chairs
CNY Regional Economic Development Council

Mr Simpson/Ms. Laraque-Arena

I am pleased to write in support of the city of Cortland's application for funding under Governor Cuomo's 2017 Downtown Revitalization Initiative. This downtown is ready to take off.

The rationale for my enthusiasm is rooted in what we're already seeing develop downtown after years of stagnation and frustration that the district had lost its rightful place at the core of the local economy. Today, the arts, culture and entertainment are a growing component of the downtown scene and major capital investments in commercial and business spaces are helping to secure jobs, recruit employees, and create a new "look and feel" of downtown as thriving and vital neighborhood.

There is so much more to be done, of course, and the beauty of the DRI process is that we've brought a host of stakeholders and residents together to envision what might be next. The plan is solid, leveraging past state and local investments and attracting new dollars that will establish Cortland's downtown as among the best in the region.

Mindful of what we've accomplished and buoyed by the enthusiastic support of our many partners, we are convinced that Downtown Cortland is poised to take the next step forward.

A 2017 DRI award can make that possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Garry L. VanGorder', written over a white background.

Garry L. VanGorder
President/CEO



seven
valleys
HEALTH
COALITION

June 5, 2017

Mayor Brian Tobin
25 Court Street
Cortland, NY 13045

Dear Mayor Tobin,

Seven Valleys Health Coalition (SVHC) has partnered with the City of Cortland on many occasions with great success, such as the opportunity to convene the City's Bike/Ped Committee several years ago, which provided much information for the City's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, and a draft City of Cortland Complete Streets Policy currently making its way through the formal process of adoption by the City through our joint efforts.

The City of Cortland has also been a close partner of the Transportation Coalition facilitated by SVHC through the Cortland County Mobility Management System housed at SVHC. Recent successes have included installing a real-time transit app system on the Cortland public transit buses for smart phones, planning for an appropriate location for a new bus shelter on Main Street, and beginning work on an inter-county, coordinated transportation initiative – all part of a focus on increasing opportunities for multi-modal transportation

For the past 15 years, SVHC has also completed an annual, comprehensive community assessment of the health and well-being of all county residents. In this time, the City of Cortland has seen an increase in population and a decrease in poverty making Cortland too well off to apply for some funding streams while at the same time, still needing crucial financial assistance for the new development the City of Cortland is now poised to successfully implement.

We truly value the continued invitations to have SVHC at the table when discussing redevelopment plans through the lens of ensuring and promoting that the City of Cortland is both a physically and economically healthy community. SVHC feels confident that as a DRI recipient, the City of Cortland would ensure connections were made between revitalization and an economic path forward for the whole community, using the DRI funds to lift all boats. The City of Cortland has taken a strong role in exploring for all available opportunities to expand job growth and training to help the community meet the demands made of a skilled and prepared, modern workforce. SVHC recognizes the intimate connection between income and health, and feel certain the DRI funding would have significant and positive impacts on both in the City of Cortland.

10 Kennedy Parkway
Cortland, NY 13045

(607) 756-4198

sevenvalleyshealth.org

A Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) designation and accompanying funding will allow Cortland to become one of the most vital downtowns in New York State, which would ultimately benefit all residents of Cortland County. We are well aware of the current momentum that exists in the revitalization of

Downtown Cortland and are extremely supportive of the City's application for these funds and look forward to continuing to assist with execution of such efforts should the City be successful in their bid for funding.

Please do not hesitate to be in touch if we can be of any further help in the application or execution process of the funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jackie M Leaf". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jackie Leaf
Executive Director, Seven Valleys Health Coalition
Jackie@sevenvalleyshealth.org



May 2, 2016

Central New York Regional Economic Development Council

Dear CNY REDC Representative,

The Cortland Downtown Partnership (CDP) enthusiastically supports the City of Cortland's application to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program. Historic Downtown Cortland has seen dramatic change as economic factors have influenced the ways consumers interact with commerce and culture. Growth during our industrial peak created tremendous local architectural and cultural assets that the downtown has begun to leverage through creative new approaches to mixed-use redevelopment projects. Our efforts include the repurposing of vacant downtown buildings into anchor facilities like downtown's grocery store The Local Food Store and art center Cortland Repertory Theatre.

As the downtown's management organization for the last ten years, the CDP is proud of the progress that has been made and excited for the completion of projects that are underway or set to commence soon. Through strong planning efforts under the CDP's Main Street Four Point Approach and collaboration with our local economic development team we have an engaged and equipped community that is making sustained positive changes to the quality of life for our residents and visitors.

We are very cognizant of the momentum developed through our strong public and private partnerships and look forward to the catalyzing impact that DRI funding could have on transforming our downtown into an even more highly visited destination and desirable place to work and reside. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns at adam@cortlanddowntown.com or (607) 299.4682.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Adam Megivern'.

Adam Megivern
Executive Director
Cortland Downtown Partnership



PO Box 783
Cortland, NY 13045
Phone: (607)753-6161 Fax: (607)753-0047
cortlandrep@hotmail.com www.cortlandrep.org

May 16, 2016

Producing Artistic Director
Kerby Thompson

Business Manager
Barclay Diamond

Board of Directors
John Folmer
President

Mark Re
Vice President

Garrison Marsted
Treasurer

Dorothea Fowler
Secretary

Kimberly Allen
Michele Ball
Robert Barber
Nicole Cottone
Gloria Crane
Ingrid Fox
Harriet Pratt Higgins
Tom Knobel
Tracy Koenig
William Lee
Adam McGivern
Jeff Penoyer
Sam Sheehan
Michael Sills
Annmaria Sprague

Guild Co-Presidents
Dianne Galutz
Karen Holcomb

The Honorable Brian Tobin
Mayor of Cortland
25 Court Street
Cortland, NY 13045

Dear Mayor Tobin,

As a representative of Cortland Repertory Theatre, I am writing to express my support for the nomination of the City of Cortland to the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative in the Central New York Region.

Recently, the City of Cortland and its partners have invested a great deal of time and resources in upgrading and improving our downtown area. The goal of this restoration is to reverse the community decline following the downturn of our manufacturing-based economy. Cortland Repertory Theatre is proud to be a part of this upgrade, having recently completed a 5-year, \$2.25M capital campaign to create a year-round venue for professional, live theatrical productions. CRT has a 45 year history of producing summer productions, and thanks to tremendous support from our community and state officials, we are now able to produce live theatre year-round. We have just completed our first and very successful winter season in downtown Cortland, and this is just the beginning of an exciting revitalization of our City. The potential \$10M in assistance would allow for Cortland to become one of the most vital downtowns in New York State.

The arts have a long history of establishing residence in areas suffering from a downturn. Once established, arts organizations improve the surrounding area with local attendance, tourism, and commerce. We are proud to be part of this plan for Cortland. Our downtown area is the heart of Cortland County and we believe that a strong urban core is vital to the quality of life throughout the City and County. In fact, we have already seen positive effects of the arts; the City of Cortland committed to repairing, landscaping and expanding a large parking lot next to our theatre to accommodate not only our audience members but also visitors to the downtown area.

The arts are just one part of the concentrated efforts by our community leaders to revitalize our downtown. As you know, a series of initiatives and plans are in place to stimulate growth and thanks to new, successful programming, population is on the rise and poverty is decreasing. People are investing in downtown, and it shows.

The City of Cortland is primed for success and is well on its way. There is great potential in our downtown area, and with support, Cortland will become one of the most exciting, vibrant and thriving downtowns in our area. On behalf of Cortland Rep's staff, Board, hundreds of volunteers and thousands of audience members, we highly support Cortland receiving the nomination for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

Kerby Thompson
Producing Artistic Director



October 17, 2016

City
Cortland

Mayor Brian Tobin
Cortland City Hall
25 Court Street
Cortland, NY 13045

Towns
Cincinnatus
Cortlandville
Cuyler
Freetown
Harford
Homer
Lapeer
Marathon
Preble
Scott
Solon
Taylor
Truxton
Virgil
Willet

Mayor Tobin:

I'm writing to give my full support to the Gateway Improvement for Cortland, NY. We have a tremendous opportunity just waiting for the right partners and funding. Our beautiful city and historic nature of the downtown buildings are a gem, we now need the proper entrance for the route the majority of our traffic takes to downtown. Exit 11 from Interstate 81 is such a busy exit/entrance and to entice a portion of those travelers to our downtown will have a tremendous impact on our local economy. This gateway has the potential to do just that.

The grant projects are also a model in bringing public and private entities together for the betterment of the community as a whole. The Cortland Downtown Partnership, The Chamber of Commerce, The Business Development Corporation, and the City will all play a role in the further development of the gateways to Cortland.

The Chamber of Commerce represents over 440 businesses of Cortland County and the surrounding area. Each of these businesses will be impacted with improved jobs, retained jobs, and newly created jobs as we continue to improve the City. In addition the impact in the community goes much farther. As improvements are being made you can feel the energy rise in the City and more people come out and create the type of community that makes Cities like ours successful.

I am happy to answer any further questions about my statements related to the benefits of the project. We would be pleased to host groups or individuals after completion of the projects to allow them the same benefits in their communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Bob Haight'.

Bob Haight
President/CEO
Cortland County Chamber of Commerce

June 7, 2017

Mayor Brian Tobin
City of Cortland
25 Court Street
Cortland, NY 13045

Dear Mayor Tobin:

As the owner of 96-104 Main Street, I am incredibly excited about the Downtown Revitalization Initiative's potential impact on the downtown. Downtown has made great strides forward in recent years, and I am enthusiastic about our project's ability to be a destination to drive the local and regional economy.

104 Main will create a 1,600 market rate living space and invest significantly in the building's infrastructure to support commercial growth. The project will create a fourth floor roof top dining area to support our cluster of restaurants and add accessibility enhancements including an elevator.

While this is an exciting project it would not be viable without a partnership with the state.

Sincerely,



George Seibel
President, Geon & Vin Inc.