

## Downtown Revitalization Initiative

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### Application Template

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Applications for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will be received by the Regional Councils. Applicant responses for each section should be as complete and succinct as possible. Applications must be received by the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council by **4:00 PM on June 14, 2017**. Submit your application as a Word Document to [LIREDC@esd.ny.gov](mailto:LIREDC@esd.ny.gov).

#### **BASIC INFORMATION**

Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region: Long Island

Municipality Name: Town of Oyster Bay

Downtown Name: Hicksville

County: Nassau

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

Downtown Hicksville is on the verge of a major renaissance. The Downtown's prime location for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and public support for revitalization, coupled with a NYS investment of Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding, would align the stars of circumstance and allow for the Downtown to achieve the type of revitalization which has benefitted a number of other communities on Long Island.

The Town of Oyster Bay (Town), after having received extensive public input, envisions a more walkable and bicycle-friendly environment within the Downtown. Creation of new sidewalks and improvement to preexisting pedestrian pathways, footpaths, bike paths, bike racks, cross walks and other features would provide for a safer pedestrian environment and incentivize walking and biking as viable transportation options. These improvements coupled with improvements to the streetscape such as decorative pavers, attractive lighting, newly planted trees, street art and a homogenous street and storefront signage program would create a strong sense of place intended to celebrate Hicksville's history and cultural diversity and to get people out of their cars and walking within the community.

Currently, the Downtown Hicksville area lacks open space areas where the community can gather. The Town envisions the creation of a plaza area—large community gathering space to be used for events such as fairs, farmers markets, art exhibitions, food truck nights, classic car nights, concerts, etc. Creating opportunity for large community events will bolster economic development and job creation within the area as local merchants will benefit from the influx of the events' attendees into the downtown. Additionally the Town foresees the ability to create small "parklets" or small sidewalk scale open spaces within its properties or the right-of-way of Town, County or State roads within the downtown. These small areas would feature benches, landscaping, informational kiosks, and artwork. These sites would provide a place to rest, eat, relax, and obtain directions or information on community events.

In close coordination with the Hicksville Community Council, the Hicksville Chamber of Commerce, the Hicksville Downtown Revitalization Committee, and the Hicksville community at large, the Town of Oyster

Bay is considering amending the zoning code within of the Downtown Central Business District, thereby enhancing opportunities for commercial and residential development. Such zoning changes would encourage developers to capitalize on the ability to build in close proximity to the busiest LIRR station on Long Island. An anticipated benefit of applying such zoning changes is an increase in the diversity of the housing stock in and around the downtown area. An increase of multi-unit housing complexes would provide cost effective housing options for millennials, downsizers, empty nesters and senior citizens who may otherwise be deterred from buying or renting in the community due to a lack of affordable options.

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 Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) investment, and how that investment would serve as a catalyst to bring about revitalization.

The Hamlet of Hicksville is a transit-rich and diverse community in central Nassau County. Located at the confluence of two LIRR branch lines, its train station is the busiest on Long Island, averaging 22,000 commuter trips/weekday in 2014. The Hicksville Downtown has strong physical suitability for revitalization and redevelopment as evidenced by high LIRR ridership, intensity of existing commercial land uses, infill-ready parcels, converging arterial roadways and ample sewer and utility infrastructure. Within the Downtown neighborhood exists a County-assessed fair market value of nearly \$2.4m/acre for non-residential taxable parcels. This is a clear indication of the incredible amount of economic development potential, especially for properties that are currently vacant or underutilized/underperforming. Hicksville is poised to capitalize on the strong TOD market and LIRR Third Track improvements through the implementation of a strategic zoning initiative, walkability enhancements, parking management and storefront beautification.

Downtown Hicksville is further poised for revitalization due to a forthcoming New York State Brownfield Opportunity Area designation. With use of New York State grant funding the Town of Oyster Bay completed two separate Brownfield Opportunity Area Studies: one specific to the North West portion of the Hamlet of Hicksville and one specific to the South East. As a result of these studies, the NYS Department of State has recently informed the Town that these areas of Hicksville, which are inclusive of the Hicksville Downtown, qualify for a NYS Brownfield Opportunity Area Designation. Such a designation encourages development within Downtown Hicksville as it makes certain NYS tax credits available to developers that remediate and/or redevelop sites within the designated area. The formal BOA designation for Downtown Hicksville is anticipated to be finalized within 2018.

Downtown Hicksville has been the subject of intensive, community-based evaluation over recent years, culminating in the completion of the Downtown Hicksville Revitalization Action Plan. This plan was jointly prepared by the Community Council and Chamber of Commerce, as overseen by a Revitalization Committee whose membership was comprised of a broad cross-section of local leaders and involved residents. The Committee's endorsement of the Plan evidences public support for the revitalization of this community. An investment of DRI funding into Downtown Hicksville would allow for the advancement of projects to address the community's needs identified through the Hicksville Downtown Revitalization Action Plan and to be identified through the DRI Local Planning Committee. DRI funding would allow for the community to benefit from pedestrian safety improvements, addition of community amenities, and the beautification of the Downtown, creating a strong sense of place. These improvements to the Downtown, coupled with the Downtown's optimal location for TOD and forthcoming zoning amendments, would create an environment ripe for commercial and

residential development, thereby bolstering housing diversity and economic development, resulting in a significant increase to the local tax base. A significant state investment coupled with zoning changes within the Downtown would also send a clear signal to the development community that Downtown Hicksville is primed to achieve the type of revitalization which has benefitted a number of other communities on Long Island.

## **DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION**

This section should be filled out with reference to the list of desired attributes for participation in the DRI as set forth in the DRI program description.

- 1) Boundaries of the Downtown Neighborhood.** Detail the boundaries of the targeted neighborhood, keeping in mind that there is no minimum or maximum size, but that the neighborhood should be 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 Hicksville Downtown area covers 162.2 acres and is located within Hicksville's Central Business District Zone. The Downtown area is bordered by John Street to the north and Old Country Road to the south. Its eastern border extends northward along Richard Street towards East Railroad Avenue. Its westward border extends from Hawks Court in the Downtown's southernmost corner to Maple Place in its northwest corner. A map of the Hicksville Downtown area has been inserted below and is attached to the email along with the submission of this Downtown Revitalization Initiative Application.

Hicksville Downtown District



- 2) Catchment area.** 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 destination.

Downtown Hicksville is the primary downtown to the Hamlet of Hicksville, home to approximately 42,000 residents. The entirety of Downtown Hicksville is within a half-mile radius of the LIRR Hicksville Station, the busiest train station on Long Island. This gives Hicksville a competitive advantage with respect to Transit Oriented Development feasibility and marketability. The Downtown is within a two-mile radius of six major roadways (Northern State Parkway, Long Island Expressway, Seaford-Oyster Bay Expressway, Jericho Turnpike, Newbridge Road and the Wantagh State Pkwy). The Downtown includes a commercial corridor that extends along NY Routes 106 and 107 which include a Whole Foods Market and the Broadway Mall, both of which serve a market well beyond the Hamlet. The Downtown has a traditional street grid with good connections within the area as well as with the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Several residential areas are within a 5 minute walk to the center, making pedestrian access convenient. The existing commercial tenancy coupled with robust transit service is a key attractor in incentivizing economic development and placemaking. The Downtown's expanding office market, fueled by proximity to the LIRR and local highways, provides additional opportunity for the reverse and/or intra-county commuters.

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

Downtown Hicksville is well positioned to capitalize on recent public/private investment into the area. Recent investments into the Downtown and immediate surrounding community include:

**Hicksville Train Station Rehabilitation Project** - In an effort to improve an already heavily used and relied-upon transportation asset, the MTA has committed \$68.7M towards a Hicksville Train Station Rehabilitation Project. Through this Project the MTA proposes to provide for art installations as well as “Wi-Fi and USB charging stations throughout the station; an enhanced interior waiting room; new platforms with glass-enclosed, heated waiting rooms; improved lighting; a translucent canopy roof; improved stairways, escalators, plaza elevators, a video security system, audio and digital communications systems and better signage,” according to the MTA website.

**Hicksville North Track Siding Project** - The MTA has committed \$52.3M towards the Hicksville North Track Siding Project. This funding will provide for a storage track that will enable the LIRR to add peak service trains into Manhattan. The project will provide a crucial contribution to the East Side Access project, which will enable LIRR trains to carry commuters to and from Grand Central Terminal.

**Hicksville Third Track Project** - The MTA has proposed the construction of a third LIRR track from Floral Park to Hicksville. This would ease congestion for commuters and enhance the significance of the Hicksville station as a transit hub and a crossroads where commuters could stop to eat or shop. As part of the State’s DEIS, there is a proposed parking structure adding approximately 900 spaces for the ridership using the Hicksville LIRR station.

**Hicksville Athletic Center** - The Town of Oyster Bay invested \$9M+ into the Hicksville Athletic Center located within the Hicksville Downtown. The Athletic Center provides for a plethora of recreational activities, community events, and physical fitness programs as further detailed within Section 5 of this Application.

**Rte 106 & 107 Repaving Project** - In 2015, the New York State Department of Transportation invested in repaving Routes 106 and 107 within the Downtown. This investment counteracted the problems that poor roads posed to both the physical attractiveness of the area as well as to the efficiency of transit for local residents and businesses alike.

**Broadway Mall Renovation** - Just outside of the Hicksville borders, the Broadway Mall recently underwent a \$50M renovation which focused on updating the exterior of the main entrance by removing the existing pillars and reworking the facade. The project also included new flooring and ceilings in interior walkways. Outdoors, new benches and seating were installed, and foliage and flowers were planted. In addition to this renovation project, the Broadway Mall continues to be further developed with recent additions of a Chick-fil-A and a new Starbucks, as well as the addition of a family fun center including bowling and arcade games. Given its contribution to economic development and job creation in the area, Broadway Mall is a local anchor institution within ½ mile from the Hicksville Downtown.

**250 Duffy Avenue, Hicksville** - Multi-million dollar rehabilitation of an old industrial building (98,000 + s.f.) to accommodate “Designatronics,” an engineering firm that services legacy sectors such as aerospace, defense, and industry, as well as growing sectors such as biotechnology (<http://www.designatronics.com/about/>). This project, in particular, forwards the LIREDC regional priority of creating high-skilled jobs in key economic growth areas such as advanced manufacturing (LIREDC Progress Report 2016, 36).

**300 Duffy Avenue, Hicksville** – “Nassau Candy” expanded an existing industrial building (25,000 + s.f.) to accommodate a growing business.

**100 – 110 Duffy Avenue, Hicksville** – Multi-million dollar rehabilitation of commercial buildings to accommodate New York Community Bank, a New York Sports Club training center, and office space

The Sears Property, 154 Broadway and 100 West Old Country Rd Projects listed below have recently submitted applications to the Town for the redevelopment of these properties. These applications are currently under review by the Town’s Department of Planning and Development:

**Sears Property** –Redevelop 26 acre Sears property to include a mixed-use component. Approximately 590 residential units are proposed.

**154 Broadway, Hicksville (old Chroma Paint)** – Redevelopment of the site with retail on the first floor and apartments on the second floor.

**100 West Old Country Road, Hicksville (old IHOP)** – A minor addition, interior alteration, façade renovation and minor landscaping improvement to re-open IHOP.

In addition to the above listed investments and current proposals for investment, Downtown Hicksville has attributes which further enhance opportunities for investment into the area. Each year the Town of Oyster Bay receives an annual appropriation of federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. CDBG funding can be invested into communities which are located within low-to-moderate income areas. The Downtown is located in an area which meets this CDBG eligibility criteria thereby allowing for the infusion of CDBG into this community as a supplement to any awarded DRI funding. Additionally, the NYS Department of State has recently informed the Town that the Downtown Hicksville area qualifies for a Brownfield Opportunity Area designation. As per General Municipal Law, Article 18-C 970-r, projects located in a designated BOA may receive a priority and preference when considered for NYS grants and other financial assistance. A BOA designation also encourages development within Downtown Hicksville as it makes NYS tax credits available to developers who remediate and/or redevelop sites within the designated area.

- 4) 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.

Downtown Hicksville is strategically positioned to benefit from and contribute to the projected growth in healthcare, high-tech and educational industry sectors. The Downtown's access to public transportation (LIRR and NICE Bus) will attract those entering the workforce locally and those that choose to work in the NY metro area but live on Long Island. Recently, New York Community Bancorp (NYCB) acquired two office buildings totaling more than 460,000 sf located at 100 and 102 Duffy Avenue, directly across from the LIRR station. NYCB plans on using a portion of the floorspace to house its back-office operations. The numerous other large commercial buildings within the Downtown have the opportunity to support smaller niche businesses and shared workspace that would benefit greatly from the proximity to the LIRR and the development of additional multi-family housing in the immediate vicinity.

Overall, unemployment among the residents of Hicksville has fallen over the last several years as a result of both a resurgence of local opportunities and an increase in jobs in other areas, such as Manhattan, for which residents often benefit from multi modal mass transit opportunities. According to recent US Census Bureau data (2013), the total amount of companies within Hicksville has grown by 3.9% from 2011-2013, meaning more job opportunities. These reports show that from 2011-2013, 11 industry clusters experienced positive growth with the largest being Finance and Insurance (12.5%), Utilities (9%), Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (7.8%) and Construction (6.1%). Based on the "Employment and Wages by Industry Cluster, Long Island Region" report, there have been significant improvements in average wage and total employment from 2011-2013. Overall, unemployment among Hicksville residents between the ages of 20 to 64 has fallen from a high point of 7.1 percent in 2013 to 6 percent in 2015—its lowest point since before the Great Recession.

[https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_15\\_5YR\\_S2301&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_5YR_S2301&prodType=table)).

Additionally, the appeal of Hicksville to professionals can be gleaned from the recent rise in the number of residents holding Bachelor's Degrees. While only 543 and 508 residents held Bachelor's degrees in 2011 and 2012, respectively, the number has jumped in recent years to a height of 849 in 2014. Yet, statistics from 2015 reveal a decline in the number of residents with Bachelor's degrees to 793—a marked improvement over the figures of a few years prior, but an indication nonetheless that more work must be done to improve opportunities in Hicksville in order to preserve and further the gains that have been made in recent years

([https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_14\\_5YR\\_C150021&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_5YR_C150021&prodType=table)).

Ultimately, increasing employment and attracting educated residents will fuel Hicksville's revitalization, as well-paid professionals are more likely to frequent local business establishments, setting off a cycle of economic growth. The proximity of these establishments to residential housing and multi-modal public transportation will ensure that this growth is sustainable in the long term.

- 5) Attractiveness of physical environment.** Identify the properties or characteristics that the downtown possesses that contribute, or could contribute if enhanced, to the attractiveness and livability of the downtown for a diverse population of varying ages, income, gender identity, ability, mobility, and cultural background. Consider, for example, the presence of developable mixed-use spaces, varied housing types at different levels of affordability, walkability and bikeability, healthy and affordable food markets, and public parks and gathering spaces.

One of the Downtown's most attractive attributes is the availability of multi-modal transportation to and from the area. Downtown Hicksville sits almost midway between the north and south shores of Long Island and offers extensive multi-modal transit opportunities. It is well-served by major transportation and transit services which promote sustainable growth. Perhaps its most significant asset is the Hicksville Train Station—the LIRR's busiest station on Long Island—which provides crucial access to the Downtown area. Travel time between the Hicksville Station and NYC Penn Station is between 40 and 50 minutes, making Hicksville a desirable place to live for NYC commuters. Additionally, as an intersection point of two train lines, the station draws non-Hicksville residents to the area who represent important potential consumers for Downtown commercial enterprises. The area also serves as a hub on several major bus lines, and it benefits from easy access to the Northern State Parkway, Long Island Expressway, Seaford-Oyster Bay Expressway, Jericho Turnpike, Newbridge Road and the Wantagh State Pkwy. The physical layout of the downtown is highly conducive to infill redevelopment extending radially from the LIRR station. There are also opportunities to connect existing neighborhoods to the Downtown through walkability enhancements, public art/civic spaces and streetscape improvements.

The Downtown is home to several recreational amenities and gathering spaces including the Town of Oyster Bay's Hicksville Athletic Center. The Athletic Center offers a variety of recreational athletic activities

for residents of all ages, thereby promoting the overall health of the region. Youth activities for children ranging in age from Pre-Kindergarten to twelfth grade include volleyball, soccer, ballet, cheerleading, badminton, basketball, tennis, and dance. Adult activities include Zumba, yoga, and cardio kickboxing classes, as well as open basketball, volleyball, and badminton. Exercise classes in Tai Chi and Balance and Coordination also serve adult populations and particularly benefit senior residents. In addition to athletic services, the Hicksville Athletic Center provides a meeting place for preschool-aged children undergoing treatment for cancer to interact and socialize through The Morgan Center Pre-School Program. This not only lifts the children's spirits by providing a safe place to play but also promotes their cognitive and social development, which are crucial to healthy futures.

Additional recreational opportunities are available at nearby Cantiague County Park which offers residents and visitors opportunities for outdoor recreation. Cantiague County Park offers turf athletic fields, a 9-hole golf course, a public pool, an ice skating rink, a miniature golf course, batting cages, basketball courts, handball/paddle ball courts and playgrounds. Nearby Kennedy Park also offers an outdoor recreational area and meeting space with a gazebo.

An urgent care facility is also located in close proximity to the Downtown area, providing easy access to emergency healthcare. Additionally, the American Dental Center and People Care, which offers home care services, are located directly within the Downtown.

Downtown Hicksville is a cultural melting-pot with a number of ethnic dining establishments, specialty food markets and cultural centers, all centered around the busiest LIRR station on Long Island. The ethnic diversity is reflected in the variety of local restaurants within and bordering the Downtown area which offer American, Middle Eastern and Afghani, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Thai, and Colombian options. A Philippines Best food market, a Bakaliko Greek Grocery Store, an Apna Bazar South Asian grocery, an American Mini Mart, and a Hicksville Super Bazar also serve local populations. In addition to dining options, the Hicksville Downtown offers clothing shops serving diverse populations. For instance, Junaid Jamshed sells Pakistani clothing with a desire "to expose the beautiful South Asian culture to the Western society" (<https://salaishop.com/pages/about-us>).

A plethora of religious institutions in the area similarly convey Hicksville's diverse character. Christian establishments include Parkway Community Church (a member of the Reformed Church in America), St. Ignatius Loyola Roman Catholic Church, the Hope Community Sister-St. Dominic Church, St. Peter's Syriac Orthodox Church, Evergreen Presbyterian Youth, a Church of Scientology of Long Island, and a Church Unleashed which holds "exciting, casual, and relaxed" services that are characteristically modern (<http://www.mychurchunleashed.tv/hicksville>). The Long Island Abundant Life Church, an Asian American Christian Church, also serves many of the area's Chinese-American residents, and the Iglesia Cristiana Manantial Abierto serves many Latino/a residents. Meanwhile, local Hindus worship at the Asamai Hindu Temple, while local Sikhs attend services at Guru Nanak Darbar of Long Island. Hicksville's Downtown also lies near Jewish places of worship, including the Jericho Jewish Center and the MiYad. Parochial schools in the Downtown, including St. Ignatius Loyola School and Trinity Lutheran School, also reflect the religious diversity of the area.



Cultural institutions in the area include the Gregory Museum, a 1895 courthouse that has been restored as a museum of earth science, natural history, and local history. The museum collects and preserves significant local artifacts and holds educational programs for residents and visitors. The Long Island Puppet Theatre is also nearby. Additionally, the Downtown encompasses Bollywood DJs and borders Pakistani Dramas, which produces South Asian television entertainment (<http://www.hitpak.com/>).

Annual events, such as the India Day Parade and the Pakistan Day Parade, further demonstrate the ethnic and cultural diversity of the region. The Hicksville Chamber of Commerce also holds a widely attended, free-admission annual street fair at Kennedy Park with food, rides, music, and free giveaways. The fair enables local businesses to benefit from advertising and vendor booths. Additionally, the Kismet Shrine Center holds free-admission paint nights, where residents gather to create art and to enjoy food and drink (<http://www.lifeonlongisland.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=events.eventdetail&City=Hicksville&EventID=40966>).

A key to the ongoing small business success in Downtown Hicksville is the distinction that has been drawn between the Broadway Mall and downtown commercial markets. Hicksville embraces both the mega-retail hub and downtown mom-and-pop storefronts. The Broadway Mall includes national stores such as Target, Aeropostale, American Eagle, Bath and Body Works, Carter's Babies and Kids, The Children's Place, the Disney Store, Famous Footwear, Forever 21, H & M, Macys, IKEA, and Old Navy. Its stores provide desirable shopping destinations to draw visitors to Hicksville and can supplement the businesses within the Downtown itself. Main street businesses include a variety of restaurants as well as the Hicksville Sweet Shop, House of Donuts Diner, Hicksville Flowers, and Fluff and Puff, a pet groomer. In addition, several permanent markets, including several local specialty stores, offer healthy food options.

- 6) Quality of Life policies.** Articulate the policies in place that increase the livability and quality of life of the downtown. Examples include the use of local land banks, modern zoning codes, comprehensive plans, complete streets 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.

A Downtown Hicksville Revitalization Action Plan (Plan) was formulated by the Chamber of Commerce and Community Council. The Plan stipulates that the long-range goal of revitalization would be best served by appropriate zoning amendments to encourage redevelopment. With considerable community input the Town of Oyster Bay has arrived at a conceptual zoning proposal, consistent with the Plan – including transit-oriented development near the train station and traditional downtown development along the Broadway corridor. Following extensive community outreach efforts the Town Board will hold a public hearing on the final conceptual proposal, followed by Town Board action to adopt new zoning legislation.

The Town is currently working in conjunction with NYS and Nassau County to adopt a Complete Streets policy. The Town's efforts will also apply Smart Growth principles to promote walkability and create a range of housing options. The Plan also includes multi-modal transportation projects and road renovations intended to slow drivers down in order to promote walkability and bikeability. Streetscape improvements such as the planting of trees will force drivers to slow down by narrowing the appearance of the road, will have positive environmental benefits, and will improve the attractiveness of the Downtown area (Plan 27).

Efforts to expand housing options for senior citizens and young professionals will also generate greater tax revenue. A large majority of multifamily units in the Town are tax positive and will therefore reduce pressures to raise property taxes for the community as a whole in the future. The local school district in particular would benefit from increased revenue, as the influx of senior and single residents with no children will increase the tax base without increasing the student population served (Plan 39).

- 7) 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.

Hicksville is beyond ready for revitalization of their Downtown. The process of gathering public opinion has been ongoing for approximately 5 years. Massive community meetings have been held. Recently, a record-breaking meeting in November 2016 was attended by over 700 residents - the interest overflowed the planned meeting space and we moved into the high school gymnasium. The feedback at this meeting was overwhelmingly supportive of the plan. On May 25, 2017, a follow up community meeting was held in the same location to address remaining questions and concerns of the community; this meeting was attended by over 400 residents. Residents have also provided comments on Town proposals via the Town website. Small committees also conduct regular outreach to support various focus groups. Residents of Hicksville are very well-organized, with a variety of local civic organizations, the Chamber of Commerce, Veterans organizations and non-profit services reporting to one umbrella group - the Hicksville Community Council - which regularly attends local government meetings. The result of this public input and support has manifested itself into the creation of the Downtown Hicksville Revitalization Action Plan.

Additionally, Nassau County fully supports the Town of Oyster Bay's revitalization initiative in Downtown Hicksville. In full coordination with the Town, The County Department of Public Works will be initiating and managing a complete streets traffic study and comprehensive improvement plan for the Downtown street network. The County expects the study to commence in the fall of 2017 as to allow for full synchronization with the Town's review of a new mixed-use zoning district for the Downtown. The completion of the study will provide critical information necessary to allow for efficient developer permit reviews.

Support for the Town's vision for Downtown Hicksville and pursuit of funding through the Downtown Revitalization initiative is well exemplified by the letters of support submitted along with this application. Letters of support have been prepared and submitted by the County of Nassau, the Hicksville Chamber of

Commerce, the Nassau Council Chamber of Commerce, and the Plainview-Old Bethpage Chamber of Commerce.

James McCaffrey, Deputy Commissioner of the Town of Oyster Bay's Department of Economic Development would serve as the local lead for the purpose of working with outside experts in the development and oversight of a local DRI Plan. Mr. McCaffrey has been Deputy Commissioner of Economic Development since its inception in 2010; he has also been the Town's liaison to the Downtown Hicksville Revitalization Committee since it was formed in 2010. Over the past seven years Mr. McCaffrey has participated in numerous community meetings regarding the redevelopment of Downtown Hicksville. The Town's Department of Economic Development has taken the lead role in the proposed rezoning of Downtown Hicksville, for which a Town Board Hearing to consider this proposal is anticipated to be held within the next few months. Additionally, Mr. McCaffrey served as the Town's lead representative on both the Southeast Hicksville and Northwest Hicksville Brownfield Opportunity Area grant funded studies; completion of these studies entailed extensive community outreach as well as working with a team of planners and environmental consultants to stay within budget and produce the finest possible document. Mr. McCaffrey has experience working with all levels of government. In particular on the state level, Mr. McCaffrey has worked with Empire State Development, Department of State, Department of Transportation and Department of Environmental Conservation. In the private sector, the Town's Department of Economic Development serves as the Town's ambassador to the development community. Mr. McCaffrey has extensive dealings with both large and small developers and business owners that are looking to expand their current operations or relocate to the Town of Oyster Bay. These contacts and prior dealings will be instrumental to the redevelopment of Downtown Hicksville.

- 8) Readiness:** Describe opportunities to build on the strengths described above, including a range of transformative projects that will be ready for implementation with an infusion of DRI funds within the first one to two years (depending on the scope and complexity of the project) and which may leverage DRI funding with private investment or other funds. Such projects could address economic development, transportation, housing, and community development needs. While such projects should have demonstrated public support, it is recognized that projects will ultimately be vetted by the Local Planning Committee and the State. Explain how the majority of projects proposed for DRI funding demonstrate their readiness for implementation.

While the Town understands that projects funded through DRI will be determined through a local planning process, the Town has identified multiple project concepts which could be implemented within the first one to two years of DRI funding. The below detailed projects have the potential to transform Hicksville into a walkable Downtown destination by applying more efficient traffic measures, creating pedestrian-friendly walkways and amenities, creating a strong sense of place and community, and providing open spaces for community events. Each of these measures will contribute to the overall development of the area, as increased foot traffic will benefit local businesses. Projects that are nearly ready for implementation include:

Hicksville Downtown Path

The Town proposes to develop and construct a walking path that will form a loop around the designated Downtown area, with spurs to connect to specific areas of interest. Using a mixture of streetscape design elements, a safe path for use by pedestrian or bicyclists will be clearly defined, and signs denoting location and distances will be posted. It is intended that the path will be approximately 1.5 miles in length, and either directly connect to, or have designated paths to, locations such as the Hicksville-LIRR Station, the Hicksville Public Library, Hicksville Athletic Center, Hicksville Community Center, and Gregory Museum.

#### Elevated Community Space

The Downtown Hicksville area is lacking in open space areas where the community can gather. While the Town does hold various properties in the Downtown area, these properties are primarily commuter parking lots around the Hicksville – LIRR station. In order to provide for a large space where the community can gather for events such as fairs, farmers markets, food truck nights, or concerts, the Town proposes to construct an elevated park plaza over one of the centrally located parking lots in the Downtown area. This space can include gardens, shelters, areas for rest and relaxation, and a stage. By constructing this elevated facility, the Town can provide for a new opportunity within the Downtown Hicksville area without sacrificing an existing service. Additionally, by constructing this facility over an existing parking lot, this project has the additional environmental and quality of life benefit of reducing pollution from stormwater runoff. Rainwater captured by this space can be redirected to irrigate onsite or offsite landscaped areas. Further opportunities for this space include the construction of a series of elevated walkways which can connect this space with other areas in the Hicksville downtown while bypassing at-grade crossings of the major roadways in the area.

#### Mini-Parks

The Town proposes to construct small “parklets” within its properties or the right-of-way of Town, County or State roads. These small areas would feature benches, landscaping, informational kiosks, and artwork. Ideally these small parks would be placed along the “Hicksville Downtown Path” which is also proposed. These sites would provide a place for rest, eat, relax, and obtain directions or information on community events.

#### Complete Streets Study / Traffic Improvement Plan

As mentioned in Answer #7, the County of Nassau will expedite a complete streets study and traffic improvement plan for downtown Hicksville in the fall of 2017. Strategic traffic improvements, as identified through the study, will be ready for implementation in 2018. An award of DRI funds to Hicksville will accelerate the implementation of critical pedestrian safety/walkability and traffic mitigation strategies needed to support new mixed-use development in the downtown.

#### Signage Program

The Town proposes to facilitate a signage program within the Downtown in which community feedback will be solicited to identify a particular aesthetic and ‘theme’ which would then be applied to community signage and street signs within the Downtown. A grant program may also be developed in which the Town would make sub-awards of DRI funding to retailers within the Downtown for the purpose of having store

front aesthetics work harmoniously with the community décor. Creating a homogenous signage program within the Downtown will create a strong sense of place centered on an aesthetic and theme selected by the community.

While the Town of Oyster Bay maintains site control to allow for the majority of the above work to be completed; it is important to mention that recent years of discussion regarding the Downtown Hicksville revitalization amongst the Town, County and State will minimize lead time on coordination of efforts for work to be completed on property which is not controlled by the Town.

**9) Administrative Capacity.** Describe the extent of the existing local administrative capacity to manage this initiative, including potential oversight of concurrent contracts.

The Town of Oyster Bay has extensive experience in administering large-scale, federal- and state-funded projects concurrently with an exemplary track record of success. Recent examples highlighting the Town's ability in this regard are the Town's participation in the FEMA Public Assistance Program following Superstorm Sandy and the multiple projects currently being facilitated by the Town with use of NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program funding provided through the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery.

In response to Superstorm Sandy the Town of Oyster Bay managed 24 FEMA-approved projects with use of federal and state dollars totaling more than \$39M between 2011 and 2014. These projects were completed in perfect compliance with all associated federal, state and local regulatory agencies.

The Town of Oyster Bay is currently in receipt of NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program (NYRCRP) funding in excess of \$10M being applied across three large scale projects. The NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program is structured very similarly to the DRI program in that it begins with a planning effort convened by the state in collaboration with a planning committee that ultimately decides on the projects for implementation. Town's success in participating in this program is exemplified by the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery's (GOSR) recent request for the Town to accept additional NYRCRP funding which was initially slotted for another recipient. This request by GOSR was made because GOSR felt the Town has proven its ability to facilitate these NYRCRP-funded projects in a more cost effective manner.

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

Transit accessibility and level of service is the quintessential element for successful TOD on Long Island. The coming of LIRR East Side Access, coupled with the potential for increased intra-island and reverse-peak commuting by way of the Third Track project, will only increase Hicksville's LIRR ridership and transit profile. It is critical at this juncture that downtown Hicksville leverage these transit investments and anticipated population and employment growth by engaging in strategic policy and public placemaking improvements. DRI assistance will ultimately serve as a catalyst to finalize the planning effort, move necessary zoning amendments forward, and prepare key infill sites for private development.

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