

Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Application Template

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.

BASIC INFORMATION

Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region: Long Island

Municipality Name: Town of Brookhaven

Downtown Name: Mastic-Shirley

County: Suffolk

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

Mastic Shirley projects a positive image of its two hamlet centers and a captivating unique identity to the region, which is linked by rail and buses. It successfully blends and supports the exchange of commerce and residents between business districts and maintains active connections to surrounding neighborhoods, community gardens, parks, and the Forge River.

There is an active mix of public social life for teens, families and seniors with a central, organized attractive plaza to hold festivals and relax away from the noise of traffic. Cultural trails tie together the historic fabric of the communities and are a great source of pride.

Walking and biking from neighborhood streets to the town center, civic buildings and shopping is safe and fun. Waiting for transit under tree-lined streets in attractive shelters is comfortable and shared by different generations of diverse people. Montauk Highway is a safe orderly steady progression of movement through the community.

Mastic enjoys its historic charm with prosperous businesses and a vibrant small-town atmosphere that is healthy and friendly with pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods.

Downtown Shirley has significant economic development potential, incentives, and design standards to ensure that a greater intensity of use has long term positive impacts on livability and provides for infrastructure improvements to benefit future generations of residents.

Mixed use and affordable housing near the train station supports a Welcome Center in a landscaped, shady, well maintained parking lot that accommodates commuter parking.

With employment opportunities and attractive locations for growth, Mastic-Shirley is recognized for the quality of its recreation and restaurants, proximity to health care, diversity of its residents, incentives for businesses, and affordable living opportunities.

These blended downtowns represent a vibrant community where the workforce wants to live, work and raise their families.

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 Mastic-Shirley downtowns are ripe for transit-oriented downtown development with their commercial centers serving more than 50,000 residents from the Mastic-Shirley peninsula and their location near vibrant industrial employment centers. Nearby, the Shirley LIRR train station is used by nearly 1,500 riders a day and the community prides itself on its ocean beaches and many historic sites.

From 2006 to today, the mixed-use, main street zoning set the stage for millions of dollars of private commercial development, hundreds of thousands of dollars of local government investment, and a multi-million dollar project to establish a sewage treatment plant. The construction of sanitary infrastructure will allow many of the existing businesses, constrained by regulations, to redevelop new retail niches and provide different forms of affordable housing.

With this proposal, we seek funding and council from the Regional Economic Development Council/Downtown Revitalization Initiative in creating a strategic investment plan to realize the whole vision of vibrant quality downtowns supported by transit and infrastructure.

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 Mastic-Shirley Downtown consists of two hamlet centers, separated with an incentivized Transitional Area Overlay District regulating specific design standards. The Mastic-Shirley Montauk Highway corridor extends 1.7 miles, from the intersection of William Floyd Parkway (CR 46) east to the Forge River. The Shirley Hamlet Center encompasses nearly 50-acres and the Mastic Hamlet Center nearly 23-acres.



The Town’s adopted Land Use Plans created two defined Main Street Business Districts to ultimately reverse the effects of historic commercial sprawl while still providing a mix of land use opportunities. The two hamlet centers were rezoned to the Town’s Main Street Business District to provide clear and predictable guidance to develop market confidence, stimulate investment and create certainty within the community.

- 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.

The Mastic-Shirley downtowns are surrounded by dense established residential neighborhoods that are located near a busy LIRR train station with 15-18 stops/day. The population of the hamlets of Mastic and Shirley grew by 8% in the 7- years since the 2010 census and is currently over 50,000 persons; with the majority of the residents, between 18-34 years old, totaling more than 60% of the population. The downtown is within minutes of an actively growing industrial park, the Brookhaven National Lab, and the Meadows at Yaphank a 240-unit apartment complex, which is under construction. The commercial catchment area includes 13,741 housing units and 33,086 residents with a median income of \$80,258 (2010 Census).

Residents of Mastic & Shirley, and the surrounding hamlets of Mastic Beach, Moriches, Brookhaven, and Yaphank, all regularly frequent the Montauk Highway commercial shopping areas for their goods and services. While two of the Town’s top ten employers, Brookhaven National

Laboratory and the William Floyd School District, are located within the downtown catchment area, making these downtowns their primary downtown destination.

A seasonal influx of tourists taking advantage of easy ocean access also supports the businesses in the downtown. With the downtown development framework and financial commitment to infrastructure that has already been laid by the Town and the County, an infusion of \$10 million in technical assistance and project funding can yield immediate and long lasting value for New York State.

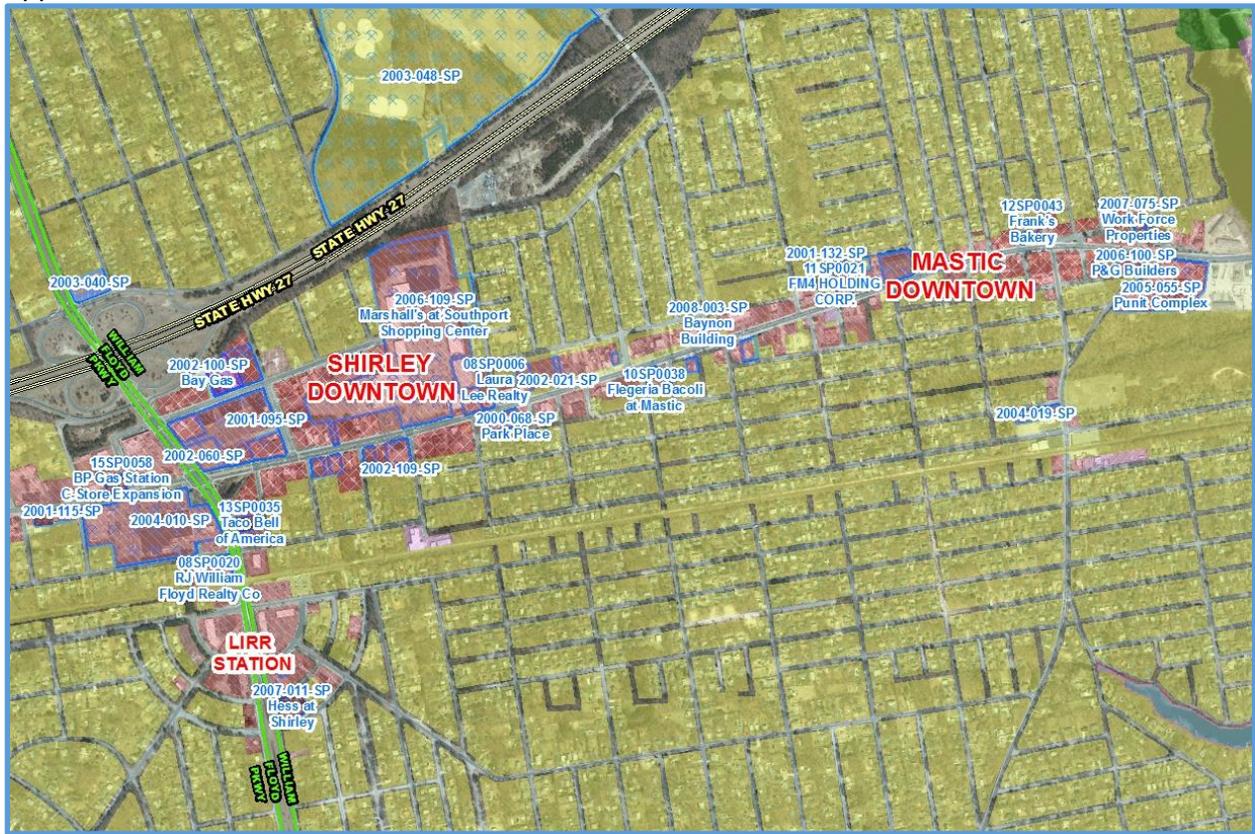
Top Ten Employers in the Town of Brookhaven		
Employer	# of Employees	Location
1. Stony Brook University	14,000	Stony Brook
2. Stony Brook University Medical Center	5,500	Stony Brook
3. Brookhaven National Laboratory	3,000	Shirley
4. John T. Mather Memorial Hospital	2,500	Port Jefferson
5. Brookhaven Memorial Hospital Medical Ctr	2,500	East Patchogue
6. Eastern Suffolk BOCES	2,000	E. Patchogue
7. Three Village Central School District	1,650	East Setauket
8. William Floyd School District	1,650	Mastic
9. St. Charles Hospital	1,600	Port Jefferson
10. Quality King Distributors	862	Yaphank

Source: Division of Economic Development

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.

The Mastic-Shirley downtown has experienced tremendous public and private investment since the adoption of the 2006 Land Use Plan. Targeted areas for main street redevelopment have seen millions of dollars in private investment in conformance with legislated downtown design standards, as illustrated on the site plan map. The County completed a multi-million dollar reconstruction of the main street with continuous sidewalks, street lighting, drainage and landscaping. In excess of \$189

million dollars has been allocated for the construction of a sewage treatment plant and sewer system, to provide capacity to the downtowns is in final design and engineering and expected to begin construction in 2018. The connection to new sewer infrastructure will permit many opportunities for additional commercial and residential investment.

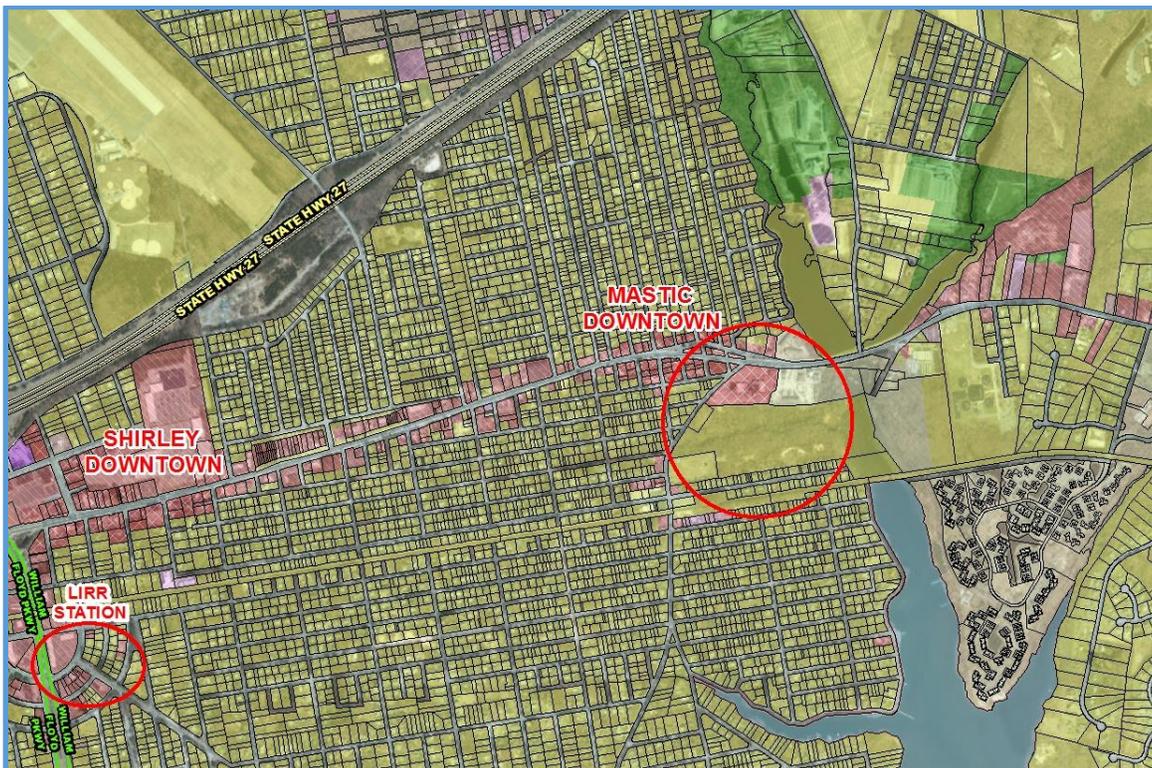


SITE PLAN INVESTMENTS IN MASTIC & SHIRLEY

The Long Island Railroad Shirley train station is surrounded by surface parking and an aging underutilized retail center on 3-acres suitable for transit oriented redevelopment. The east end of the Mastic downtown is anchored by an aging and underutilized retail center & movie theatre on 5.25 acres, adjacent to a 33-acre vacant parcel on the Forge River with potential for attached housing with an active recreational component.



The establishment of sanitary sewer service increases the development and livability potential of this area and provides tremendous opportunity for economic growth. The sewer service will provide a foundation for mixed use development of these two downtowns.



- 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.

This Downtown is located approximately 2.5 miles from an active Industrial Park with industries ranging from pharmaceutical manufacturing to a major bakery to medical uses. The Shirley Industrial Park has over 1,500 employees, which will support the growth of the Mastic-Shirley Downtown revitalization. Across the street from the entrance to the Shirley Industrial Park is the Suffolk County Police Department's 7th Precinct, which is a 24/7 operation that will support restaurants and additional growth resulting from the Downtown revitalization. In addition to the Shirley Industrial Park, Clare Rose, a major beer distributor with almost 200 employees, is also in close proximity to the Downtown. Stony Brook University has a dorm facility within 2 miles of the Downtown. This dorm is home to almost 300 students who will all support and sustain the activity in the Downtown.

About 6 miles north of the Downtown is the Brookhaven National Lab (BNL) and a new mixed use housing facility called Meadows at Yaphank. Brookhaven National Lab is home to almost 3,000 employees, some of whom reside on site at the Lab. Phase 1 of Meadows at Yaphank, which is currently under construction, will result in 240 apartment units. While Meadows at Yaphank's Phase II includes a retail component, there are virtually no shopping, restaurants or activities in close proximity for any of the people who live or work close to the William Floyd Parkway/Long Island Expressway intersection. A revitalized Mastic-Shirley Downtown will be utilized and supported by the thousands of individuals who work and live in the surrounding areas.

There is great variety in job opportunities with ranges of salaries, levels and responsibilities available in the vicinity of the Downtown area. BNL alone has opportunities for individuals ranging from janitorial to maintenance, to management to world renowned PhDs in very specialized scientific fields. The Police Department also has various law enforcement and civilian positions at their 7th Precinct facility. The businesses and industries at the Shirley Industrial Park have a wide array of job opportunities with diversity of salary, level and significant opportunity for mobility within each industry.

As an additional benefit, there is land available in the Shirley Industrial Park. The Mastic-Shirley Downtown revitalization will help to entice businesses to relocate and grow in this area, as there will now be a vibrant Downtown for their employees to work, live and play. These new industries will in turn help to support the growing Downtown.

There is public transportation that runs from the Shirley Industrial Park to the Mastic-Shirley Downtown and further south to beyond the Neighborhood Road corridor to Smith Point County Park (http://sct-bus.org/assets/sct_systemmap.pdf). Smith Point County Park, Suffolk County's largest oceanfront park, hosts 297,927 visitors annually (information provided by Emily Lauri, Community Relations Director at Suffolk County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation, and this figure includes registered campground and outer beach users as well as vehicles traversing the toll lanes for parking, but does not include after-hours visitors), many of which will take advantage of the restaurants, bars and activities the Mastic-Shirley Downtown revitalization will afford. There is also the Mastic-Shirley train station just south of Montauk highway on the east side of William Floyd Parkway, which is walking distance to the Downtown area and will aid in attracting visitors to the region.

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.

The Mastic-Shirley downtown area is a mix of restaurants, offices, personal service shops and retail main street businesses, surrounded by single family dwellings, and summer bungalows that have been converted to year-round single family homes. The smaller homes are affordable by design and allow younger generations to buy starter homes and older generations to age in place.

The Forge River bounds the eastern limit of the Mastic downtown and offers recreational opportunities to residents and visitors that are not yet fully realized. Publicly owned land near the river presents an opportunity for recreational trail linkages from the northeastern portion of the downtown area. Parallel secondary roads permit cyclists of varying skills and abilities to move from one end of the downtown to the other without sacrificing time or competing with vehicles. Local produce is readily available at the many farm stands, within walking distance of the downtowns, just east of the Forge River.

Mastic and Shirley are unique in their history and access to natural resources such as Fire Island seashore, Smith Point ocean park, Wertheim Wildlife Refuge, and Southaven County Park and appeal to walks of life as an affordable and convenient place to live.

The J-6 Main Street Mixed-Use zoning district supports and encourages a 24/7 lifestyle.

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.

After the adoption of the 2009 Mastic Shirley Land Use Plan, the Town has taken many actions to increase livability and the quality of life for Mastic-Shirley residents and visitors. We have modified zoning codes, legislation and rezoned parcels to identify main street business districts. The associated design standards legislate wide sidewalks, storefront character and shared parking to minimize curb cuts in order to connect people to places and create pedestrian-friendly walkable communities.

In 2010, the Town adopted "Complete Streets" legislation to ensure that future design and construction of new roads will be safe and convenient for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists. Established in 2013, the Suffolk County Land Bank is available for collaborative revitalization efforts, as necessary.

Although not a Business Improvement District (BID), the Chamber of Commerce of the Mastics & Shirley is very active promoting economic growth through promotion and development of businesses and is presently discussing forming a BID. <https://masticshirleychamber.org/>

There is wide support from elected leaders and community stakeholders to incorporate age-friendly improvements and work towards joining the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. Seniors, 50+ years of age, account for approximately 22% of the community and children under the age of 17 account for approximately 20% of the overall population.

Developing the appropriate code to realize the goals of a context sensitive transit oriented development around the existing train station will be one our next steps to increase the livability in the downtowns.

- 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.

The Town of Brookhaven is dedicated to restoring an affordable, high quality of life for its residents, and strives to increase economic strength and resiliency. Revitalization efforts for the Mastic-Shirley downtown area are underway, and strong local community support exists in the Mastics & Shirley Chamber of Commerce, as well as the support of local, state, and federal officials, including Congressman Lee Zeldin, Assemblyman Dean Murray, Senator Tom Croci; Assemblyman Fred Thiele, County Legislator Kate Browning, Brookhaven Town Supervisor Edward P. Romaine, and Deputy Supervisor/6th District Councilman Daniel J. Panico, and Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone. With the additional support of the DRI Planning Committee, this project will have the support it needs and the opportunity to be successful.

Brookhaven Town Councilman Dan Panico will serve as the Local Lead for the program as he is the elected official who represents the 6th Council District, which includes the hamlets of Mastic and Shirley.

The support of the REDC and the DRI funding to support this project would bolster the efforts made by the local, state, federal government and the community to define the Mastic-Shirley downtown area, and redevelop existing properties along the Montauk Highway Corridor to encourage future growth. In addition, this funding would be used to further efforts to transform the languishing Mastic-Shirley Train Station to a viable transportation hub.

Councilman Panico has focused on the revitalizing the Montauk Highway Corridor in Mastic and Shirley since first being elected in 2010. He has met with property owners, developers, fellow elected officials, town planning staff, and civic associations to address structures that have fallen into disrepair. Whether through zone changes or site plan improvements, Councilman Panico has guided the successful redevelopment of many properties along the corridor and continues to evaluate properties in need of redevelopment.

A very important factor in the successful development of a downtown in Mastic and Shirley is the need to alleviate significant traffic congestion along Montauk Highway and surrounding roads.

Councilman Panico has spearheaded the effort to have an additional rail road grade crossing installed at Hawthorne Avenue in Mastic. Presently, there are only 2 crossings in the area and traffic that builds up on Mastic Road can make it nearly impossible for residents to easily reach their desired destinations along Montauk Highway. The Town recently hired a traffic consultant to prepare data that will be presented during a hearing with the MTA sometime this fall.

Lastly, Councilman Panico has played a lead role in negotiations with the FAA to use property at the Town's Brookhaven Calabro Airport for the construction of a sewer treatment plant by Suffolk County, which will enable existing and new businesses along the Montauk Highway the ability to hook up to sewers.

- 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.

The most significant transformative project for the entire Town of Brookhaven is the construction of the new sewage treatment plant (STP) and sewer infrastructure in the Mastic Shirley downtowns. However, the ability of the commercial properties to shoulder the costs of the new sewer district fees, as well as the individual commercial connections is a concern. Once construction of the STP and sewer system is completed in 2020, individual commercial connections will allow redevelopment of underutilized sites and catalyze downtown growth and the installation of quality of life amenities.

The second greatest opportunity in these downtowns is the redevelopment of the Shirley train station area. There are properties available for redevelopment, the sewer infrastructure design includes the properties and there is a need for affordable housing and sense place development. A strategic plan and code for the development of the properties around the train station could be drafted, vetted, legislated and then implemented as soon as the sewer is available. The Town Board and the local Chamber of Commerce has committed to the revitalization of the Shirley and Mastic downtowns and will facilitate public review and expedite legislative approvals. A public/private partnership using private and public property, that includes the redevelopment of the train station surface parking and Welcome Center can be realized in concert with the development of the STP infrastructure.

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

The Town is committed to improving quality of life for its residents and envisions successful and thriving downtowns throughout the town. Its vision strongly aligns with the REDC's Key Strategies for Economic Growth to expand infrastructure, improve job access, revitalize its downtown and transit hubs and attract regional businesses.

There are many examples to describe the Town of Brookhaven's administrative capacity to manage this initiative. One example is demonstrated by the Town's strong leadership and ability to work side-by side with Federal, State, County and Local governments, and Community groups to successfully complete its revitalization efforts. This strong and responsible leadership has been demonstrated by its successful collaboration with other government leaders and agencies to revitalize blighted areas, increase economic development, improve infrastructure, and improve its downtowns.

Another consideration is the Town's ability to meet all requirements as mandated by the State. In June 2013 the Town of Brookhaven established a Grants Committee to establish policies and procedures that ensure proper implementation, monitoring, and completion of its grant projects, in order to maximize efficiency, prioritize allocation of Town funds and employee resources, and centralize responsibility and accountability.

The Town has proven success in completion of multiple projects concurrently, and has a firm background/history of administering and maintaining its projects in compliance with all Local, State and Federal regulations/requirements. If chosen for the DRI Award, the state can be assured that the Town will prove to be successful in completing its revitalization of the Mastic Shirley downtown in a timely manner, and in accordance with all requirements. Assurance that the Town can meet those requirements proves it has a strong likelihood of success for the DRI funding.

One of the strongest indications of project success is a firm financial background. The Town of Brookhaven's strong financial background was proven by its recent Standard & Poor's Global Rating, re-affirmed in March 2017, of the Town's AAA credit rating and Stable Outlook on the Town's General Obligation Bonds. A strong financial background is key in consideration of its ability to manage a project of this magnitude. The fact that the Town has been able to maintain its stellar rating, while investing and improving its communities, is proof of its ability and commitment to succeed should it be selected for the region's DRI Award.

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

The Town, County, State, and Federal governments have made significant investments in these downtowns to purposely create quality communities for the residents and stakeholders. We look forward to working together with the Mastics & Shirley Chamber of Commerce and the LIREDC to realize the potential of this great commercial area.

The investment made toward the STP in Shirley is in excess of \$189 million dollars to date.

