



2019 DRI Application

Applications for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) must be received by the appropriate Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) by **4:00 PM on May 31, 2019** at the email address provided at the end of this application.

BASIC INFORMATION

Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region: Long Island

Municipality Name: Town of Huntington

Downtown Name: Huntington Station

County Name: Suffolk

VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

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

In collaboration with the Town of Huntington (Town), the local Huntington residents and NYS Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) funding, Downtown Huntington Station would return to the vibrant, pedestrian friendly community it once was. The vision is to bring this unique, attractive and historic downtown back to its original glory.

Building off of rigorous community and Town-based efforts in recent years, the Huntington Station Hamlet area has already begun the process of revitalization; as demonstrated by planned and newly-constructed housing and commercial spaces just north of the Huntington Long Island Railroad (LIRR) station, which include pedestrian-friendly improvements. The north/south corridors within a half-mile radius of the train station are perfectly poised to directly benefit from increased investment that would continue the revitalization of Downtown Huntington Station.

There are currently multiple vacant and blighted properties, a lack of public gathering space and clear pedestrian connectivity along the main thoroughfares to the north and south of the LIRR tracks all combine to discourage the walkable environment and sense of community that once existed. The Town and its partners envision colorful pedestrian-friendly cross walks, bike safety improvements, new trees planted along New York Avenue, sidewalks along Depot Road, an integrated security program and facade improvements of existing buildings. The creation of attractive "parklets" throughout the area would create opportunities for people to gather with their neighbors, enjoy the outdoors and socialize. Additionally, public art, such as murals and artwork throughout public spaces, created by artists residing in affordable lofts within the Downtown, would celebrate the rich and diverse history of Downtown Huntington Station. With a zoning code in place that already allows mixed-use

development and has an affordable housing requirement, DRI funding would encourage Downtown Huntington Station to continue the revitalization and foster development to both increase the commercial tax base and bring much needed housing to the downtown.

JUSTIFICATION

Provide an overview of the downtown area nominated for the DRI program, 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 emergence of Huntington Station as a successful downtown began 150 years ago and can be attributed in part to the expansion of the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR), which established a depot in 1867 on the site of the present station. The railroad attracted commerce and people to the hamlet, where three hotels, a bank, a post office, a racetrack, and two to three-story buildings on both sides of New York Avenue were built to cater to both the needs of travelers and the eastern migrating population. These buildings provided space for offices, apartments, convenience retail and service establishments. Goods and services offered included coal, lumber and feed merchants, a bicycle shop, a barber, a shoe repair store, meat and poultry purveyors, a drug store, a general and sundry store, a bakery, a grocery store, an auto repair garage, and a clothing store. Huntington Station was an important commercial center of western Suffolk County.

By the end of 1960, Huntington Station's economic growth had placed it at the top of the ten Suffolk County communities having the greatest number of manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers. In 1961, Huntington Station, with over 6.6 percent of Suffolk County's 8,100 businesses, maintained that top ten ranking.

All of that growth came to a halt during the 1960s. Under urban renewal, the 86 businesses surrounding the railroad station that comprised the economic center and vital core of Huntington Station were demolished. Sadly, the development envisioned did not occur. The urban renewal plan altogether eliminated the economic, social and cultural center of Huntington Station.

During the past twenty plus years, the Town of Huntington has enacted policies, adopted plans, invested in the infrastructure, and partnered with the community at large to overcome over fifty years of disinvestment and blight. The existence of brownfield sites in Huntington Station led to the 2016 formal designation as a New York State Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) to address these contaminated sites and work with the public towards cleanup and redevelopment. In 2018, a census tract located within the DRI area was designated an Opportunity Zone by the federal government. The award of New York State's DRI grant would become the tipping point to position Huntington Station on a fast track to coincide with all of these moving parts: planned LIRR improvements, the current mixed-use development occurring north of the tracks, and the overall move towards walkability and transit-oriented development.

DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

- 1) Boundaries of the proposed DRI area. Detail the boundaries of the targeted downtown area or neighborhood, keeping in mind that there is no minimum or maximum size, but that the area should be concentrated and well-defined. Neighborhoods beyond traditional central business districts are eligible if they can meet other criteria making them ripe for investment. Include a map that clearly delineates the area to be included in the downtown revitalization area.**

The Downtown Huntington Station area (see Figure 1) encompasses an area of 251.2 acres and is centrally located within the 3,305.7 acre Huntington Station 2010 Census Designated Place (CDP). The DRI area is divided into two segments along New York Avenue that intersect at the Huntington Station Train Station: the Residential Core and the Commercial Revitalization Core. The Residential Core is centered at the intersection of New York Avenue and Northridge Street and extends one-quarter of a mile south to the Huntington Station Train Station and one-quarter of a mile north to the intersection of New York Avenue and Academy Place. Although the predominate development along New York Avenue is defined by recently constructed and planned three story higher density housing that are within a five minute walk to the train station, there are also areas of commercial use that serve the needs of local residents. As noted in other sections of this application, several of the referenced residential projects contain retail or commercial uses on the first floor. The focus of proposed DRI improvements will be to support the continued development of multi-unit housing in the core by enhancing the residential quality of life through pedestrian improvements, expanding open space amenities and connectivity to commercial uses extending to the train station and leading to the Commercial Revitalization Core to the south. It is also important to note that the Residential Core area already has access to sewers which will allow for the continued development including artists' lofts along the west side of New York Avenue, and the proposed hotel development that will be located across from the train station on the north side of the railroad tracks.

The Commercial Revitalization Core is centered at the intersection of Pulaski Road and New York Avenue, approximately one-quarter of a mile south of the train station, and extends southward along New York Avenue to the intersection of 10th Street. The DRI plan for this second core area is to focus on commercial revitalization with related pedestrian and safety improvements that will ultimately serve as a major commercial and social attraction to the Residential Core. It should also be noted that some level of infill housing will occur in this core where appropriate along the corridor. Further, it should be noted that significant mixed use development will be added into this area, particularly in and around the train station south of the LIRR tracks when sewers are extended into the area.

The DRI boundary map (Figure 1) and DRI Assets and Opportunities map (Figure 2) are included below:



Figure 1

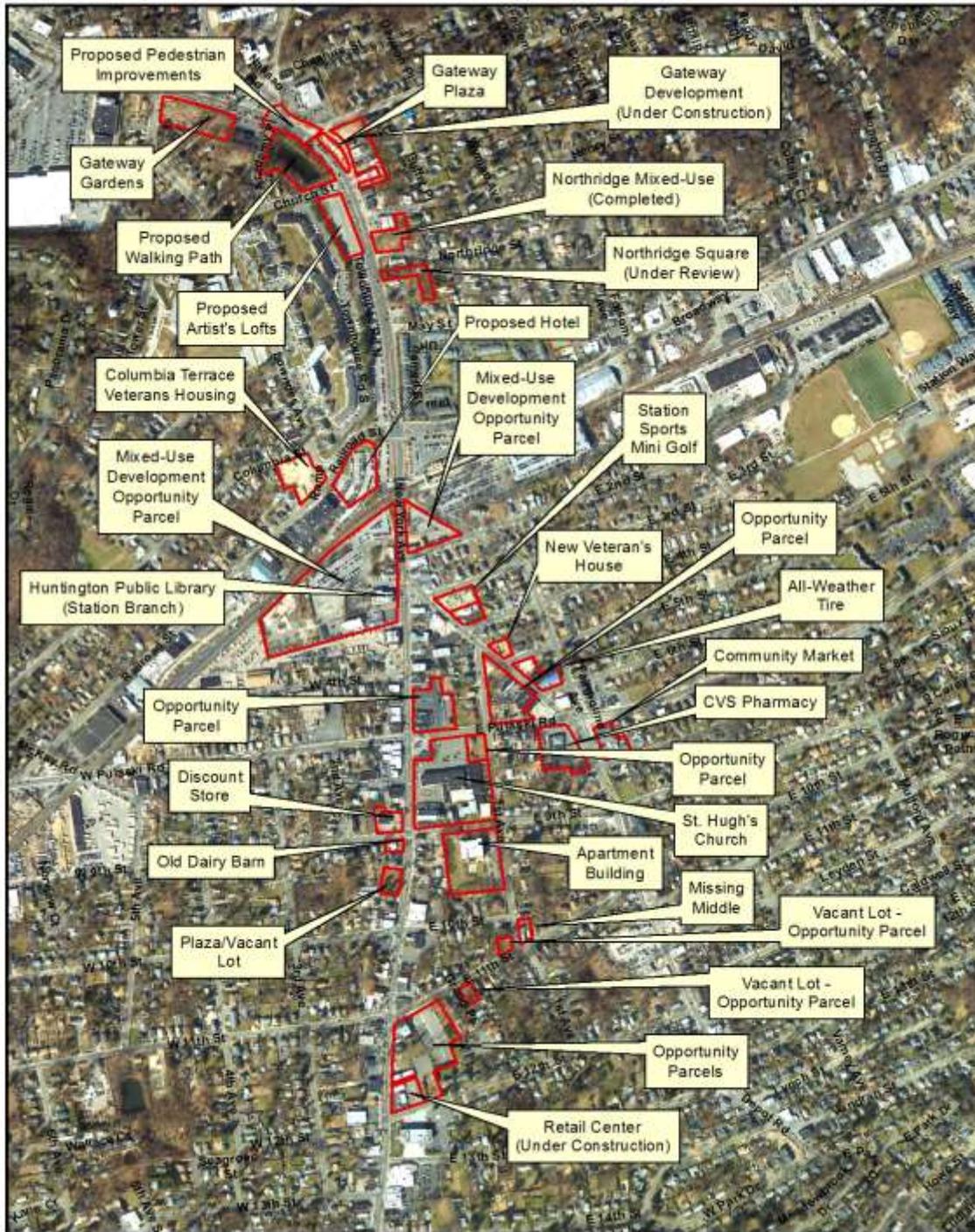


Figure 1 DRI Assets and Opportunities Map



Figure 3 – Possible Mixed Use Opportunity Parcel

2) Past investment, future investment potential. Describe how this DRI area will be able to capitalize on prior private and public investment and catalyze future investments in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas. Describe recent planning efforts that support public and private investment in the proposed DRI area.

Since 2004, downtown Huntington Station projects have received approximately \$23 million in public investment from both Town funds (approximately \$15 million) and various grants received from all levels of government, including Restore NY grants from Empire State Development and Suffolk County Downtown Revitalization Grants. These funds have been used in both planning efforts and direct actions such as land purchases to accomplish revitalization goals. The recent and future actions to make improvements in Huntington Station include the following:

Public Agency Support:

Town of Huntington Economic Development Corporation (EDC) – In 2003, The Town created an EDC to assist with revitalization efforts in downtown Huntington Station. The EDC provides

professional/technical support, grant writing and advisory services for the Town of Huntington from its high-level professionals on the Board of Directors.

New York State Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) – The Town received a \$340,000 grant for planning and community outreach concerning brownfield sites in the area as part of the application process for the BOA program. A portion of Huntington Station around the LIRR station was formally recognized as a BOA by the NYS Department of State in August 2016.

Long Island Regional Economic Development Council (LIREDC) – In its strategic plan, the LIREDC added Huntington Station to its Opportunity Agenda based on its needs and the economic potential yet to be tapped within the hamlet. Investments made by the Council to date include a \$1.5 million Empire State Development grant for the redevelopment of the nearby James D. Conte Community Center (a former NYS Armory), \$370,000 through the CFA for restoration of an historic farmhouse known as the “Teich House” (listed below), and two Restore NY grants (\$1.560 million for the Columbia Terrace Affordable Housing Condominiums and \$1.170 million for the Gateway Plaza mixed-use development – both described below). In 2018, the Town was awarded \$25,000 to conduct a feasibility study along New York Avenue for the enhancement of current mixed-use development.

Public / Private Partnerships:

Huntington Station Business Improvement District – In 2003, the Town of Huntington facilitated the formation of a Huntington Station Business Improvement District (BID), which generates approximately \$100,000 annually from property tax collection for improvements and promotion of the downtown business district. The Director of the CDA serves as liaison to the BID and provides assistance with BID projects.

Huntington Opportunity Resource Center (HORC) – The Huntington Opportunity Resource Center operates from a mixed-use building located one block south of the train station on a property recently acquired by the Town. It has twice been the recipient of a total of \$300,000 in New York Main Street grant funds, and was also the 2015 beneficiary of CFA funding under the NY Unemployed Worker Training Program, with St. Joseph’s College as the applicant and job training provider for the Center. The Center assists local residents with employment searches, job training, and small business counseling, and connects local residents with benefits and services provided through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Suffolk County.

Renaissance Downtowns – In 2012, Renaissance Downtowns was selected as the Master Developer via an RFP process for the development of specific Town-owned parcels around the Huntington Train Station. Renaissance has invested over \$4 million dollars toward extensive community outreach and planning of development of projects north of the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) tracks

along New York Avenue (Figure 4) where sewer infrastructure is presently available. The Northridge mixed-use building by Blue & Gold Homes has been completed (3-story building, 6,500 sq. ft. of retail and 16 one-bedroom apartments) and the Gateway Retail Plaza by G2D Development is under construction (3-story building, 15,000 sq. ft. of commercial space, 66 apartments). The hotel/office and artist residence projects are in advanced stages of planning. Bills have been approved during the 2018 legislative session which authorized the transfer of state-owned land (New York State Department of Transportation) used for commuter railroad parking to the Town to make way for the development of the hotel/office and artist residences/workspace. All commuter parking lost to development will be replaced.

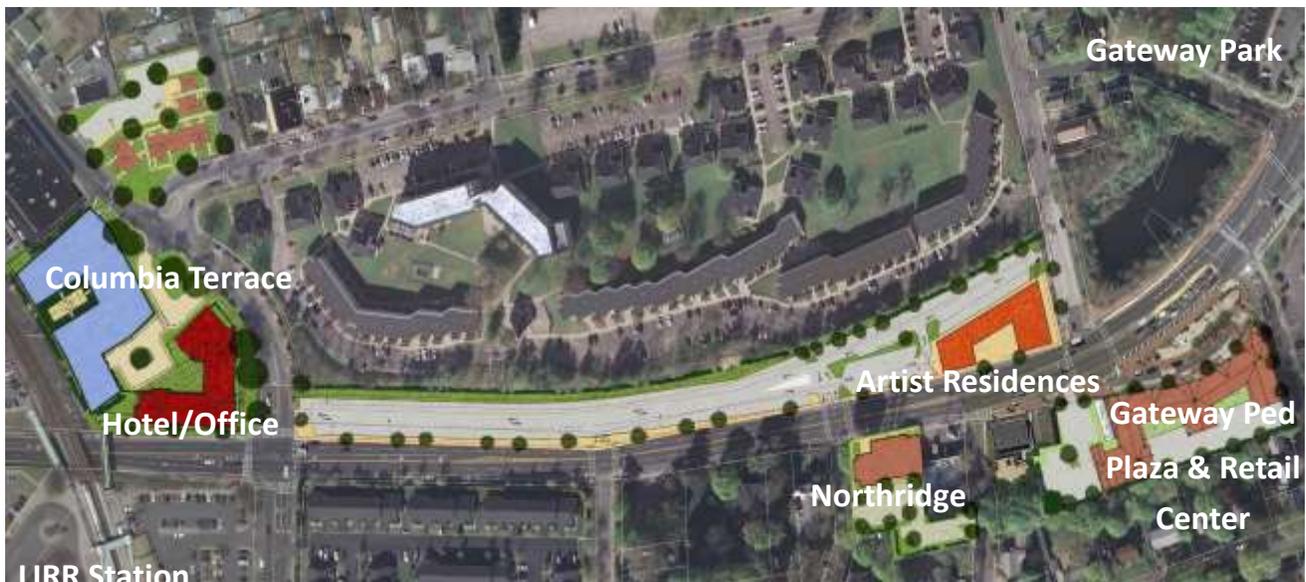


Figure 4 North LIRR Renaissance Rendering

Completed Public Projects:

Gateway Plaza – The Town acquisition of surplus land from the NYS Dept. of Transportation (NYSDOT) created from a road realignment fifty years ago at the intersection of New York Avenue (NYS 110) and Olive Street was used to convert a barely used parking area into a small pedestrian plaza with landscaping, new sidewalks, parallel parking spaces, public art and a new bus shelter.

Gateway Park / Community Gardens – The Town acquisition of several vacant lots along New York Avenue (NYS 110), east of Lowndes Avenue, was used to create a community garden where local residents can learn gardening skills and grow vegetables and flowers.

Teich House – This house and property were acquired by the Town as an addition to Gateway Park, to provide an indoor space for educational programming in connection with the adjacent community gardens.

Huntington Train Station – Landscaping and sidewalk improvements were made around the train station to improve its appearance. A volunteer beautification committee meets on an ongoing basis to help maintain the landscaping.

New York Avenue Streetscape Improvements - In limited areas, old concrete sidewalks were replaced with red brick pavers, and decorative sidewalk lamps were added to improve the appearance and safety of the pedestrian environment. This project also added sidewalk ramps at various intersections with detectable warning surfaces for handicapped accessibility and safety, as well as crosswalks and pedestrian crossing signals.

Completed Private Projects:

Avalon at Huntington Station – In 2013, the \$120 million Avalon Bay at Huntington Station complex was completed with 303 rental units (44 of which are affordable). Beechwood Homes recently completed its \$38 million construction project of 76 equity townhomes next door to Avalon known as Country Pointe at Huntington Station (11 of which are affordable). A pedestrian path to the train station was completed for these projects.

United Veterans Beacon House – A vacant parcel on Depot Road that had been taken by Suffolk County for failure to pay property taxes was acquired by United Veterans Beacon House, a charitable organization. In early 2018 they completed the construction of a building that now houses 4 veterans.

Active / Planned Public Projects:

Northridge Square - The developer of the Northridge project has a second proposal that was recently approved involving the construction of a new mixed-use building with retail space on the first floor and 14 apartments with included parking just south of the Northridge project. It also includes the renovation and restoration of an historic apartment building, containing nine units on the adjacent property, which is almost complete.

Columbia Terrace - The Town of Huntington and the Huntington Community Development Agency have combined their efforts, with the help of state and county grants, to develop a 14-unit affordable housing condominium project for military veterans. The project entailed the acquisition and merger of several parcels, some of which contained buildings in disrepair, and the realignment

of the intersection of Railroad and Lowndes Avenues to improve traffic and pedestrian safety. The project is nearly completed, with residents expected to take occupancy by October 2019.

Huntington Station Branch Library Expansion – The Huntington Library District has rented the first floor of the building at 1335 New York Avenue since 2002, where it provides a small secondary branch of their library system. In April 2018, they announced that they had reached an agreement with the landlord to also rent the second floor of the building, allowing them to double the size of the library branch.

South Hamlet Center Sewers – The Huntington Sewer District (HSD) covers the northern portion of the Huntington Station Hamlet Center north of the LIRR tracks. Capacity issues at the HSD plant currently limit servicing areas south of the LIRR tracks. However, in early 2017, Suffolk County officials announced that \$1.25 million had been approved to complete a comprehensive design and engineering plan for sewers south of Huntington Train Station. The study will examine connecting this area to the Southwest Sewer District. Additional funding of \$54.2 million and \$3 million is being requested through two proposals under the Governor’s Clean Water Infrastructure Act. The first proposed project is for sewer infrastructure improvements required to connect the Huntington Station Hub (HSH) flow to Suffolk County Sewer District #3, with related downstream improvements required by the County. The second proposal involves upgrades to the HSD Sequencing Batch Reactor and the related sewer treatment pumps. This would reduce nitrogen levels and allow for increased flow capacity that could benefit the revitalization core area near the train station.

LIRR East Side Access – The LIRR East Side Access project is anticipated to greatly benefit Huntington Station as its train station is currently the end of electrification on the Port Jefferson LIRR branch thus making it a high-volume transfer point. Just as it had 150 years ago, Huntington Train Station will once again become a catalyst for economic growth and improvements in and around the catchment area.

The Town of Huntington, together with community residents, intergovernmental partners, the development community, and other stakeholders, including civic, business, cultural, human service/not-for-profit and faith-based communities, has a unique opportunity to align and leverage the cumulative impact of the past and future investments. These valuable collaborations, along with the forthcoming East Side Access project, the Town and Renaissance Downtowns partnership, and sewer study investments, will catalyze private investment south of the train station on both private properties and public property. While the majority of improvements to date have been north of the LIRR tracks, owners of land and buildings to the south of the station have been watching and waiting for Huntington Station’s revitalization to extend south, and bring with it the infrastructure and synergistic energies needed to realize the highest and best uses of their properties to lift up the entire area.

Last year, Governor Cuomo announced that the United States Census tract that contains a portion of the catchment area along New York Avenue has been included in the federal Opportunity Zones program. This program offered through the Tax Cuts and Job Acts of 2017, encourages private investment in low-income urban and rural communities. It is the hope of the Town and members of the community that these tax benefits will attract private investment into Huntington Station and help leverage additional funding that will contribute the economic revitalization.



Figure 5 and 6 – Columbia Terrace currently being built



Figure 7- Beacon House for Veterans

- 3) Recent or impending job growth. Describe how recent or impending job growth within or near the DRI area will attract professionals to an active life in the downtown, support redevelopment, and make growth sustainable in the long-term.**

Development on the north side of Huntington Train Station has already begun to promote job growth within the downtown that will attract more commuters, residents and visitors. The DRI plans for vibrancy to the commercial core on the south side of the train station.

The Town of Huntington and Renaissance Downtowns have entered into a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) that provides opportunities for construction jobs, contracting opportunities and permanent jobs, such as retail and hospitality, for all projects undertaken through the partnership.

The recent job growth at the Northridge development included approximately 22 full time construction jobs, 13 indirect full time jobs, and 14 induced full time jobs. The Northridge development long term job growth projects \$2 million annually back into the community by 2020, with approximately 20 full time permanent jobs.

The Gateway Plaza development has generated approximately 52 full time construction jobs, 28 indirect full time jobs and 32 induced full time jobs. Its long-term job growth projects \$6.5 million annually back into the community by 2020, with 43 full time permanent jobs producing \$1.3 million in income.

These two developments alone will create 82 new units that will be within walking distance of the Huntington Train Station. With the Northridge project fully leased and occupied, and the Gateway Plaza development well underway, there will be a market -driven need for restaurants, grocery shops and convenience retail within the transit redevelopment area. To meet the demand, “The Big H” shopping center, located just outside of the DRI area, is being redeveloped to bring an additional 11,500 square feet of retail space to the area.

The thousands of working individuals throughout the Town will welcome brand new, affordable and market -rate rental housing, retail, cultural, hospitality and entertainment opportunities in the target development area. Businesses, employees, and residents alike have long expressed the need for one-bedroom units for young people working in the area, or commuting by rail to the city, and the aforementioned projects will meet that need, and bring reinvestment into the Downtown.

Unemployment among the residents of Huntington Station has dropped over the past few years due to increased opportunities locally, as well as access to career opportunities in Manhattan via mass transit. According to the US Census Bureau, while the population has modestly increased between 2013-2016, both the percentage of families living below the poverty level and the unemployment rate have steadily decreased.* If this positive trend continues, Downtown Huntington Station will be in the best position to become the cultural and economic hub it was envisioned to be, and as development continues with the anticipated hotel, office space, and additional retail and rental housing, further job growth and opportunities within the catchment area will be sustainable in the long term.

*https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_S2301&prodType=table

4) Attractiveness of physical environment. Identify the properties or characteristics that the DRI area 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.

Since 2004, the Town and other levels of government have invested approximately \$23 million in Huntington Station's infrastructure to attract private investment, beautify and make the area pedestrian friendly. Examples largely to the north of the LIRR tracks include streetscaping, brick sidewalks, new curbs, decorative streetlights, murals, a pedestrian plaza with a public art installation and seating areas, Gateway Park & Community Garden, The Teich House, rainwater harvesting garden, hanging flower baskets and holiday decorations.

One of the most attractive attributes of Downtown Huntington Station is the cultural diversity that is on display, with several ethnic restaurants, specialty food markets and religious institutions, all within close proximity to a major rail station. While the community may be known for its Hispanic/Latin population, there is a plethora of ethnic dining establishments within and bordering the Downtown area including Pakistani, Middle Eastern, Indian, Italian, Greek, Chinese, Ecuadorean, Mexican and Japanese. The annual Unity Day Parade celebrates this cultural and ethnic diversity.

The community is also home to several religious institutions. These include The Universal Church, St. Hugh's of Lincoln, Mt. Calvary Church of Huntington, Light of the Salvation Church, Iglesia Pentecostes De Fe Restaurando Almas Para Cristo, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Masjid Noor Mosque is located just 3 miles outside the DRI area. These institutions not only provide religious guidance, but serve as the cornerstone of the community, providing their members with food, counseling and emotional support.

There are medical and dental facilities within the catchment area, which provide immediate access to healthcare. Additionally, Huntington Hospital, the highest ranked community hospital in New York State, is less than two (2) miles away.

Families can also enjoy the amenities of Manor Park, including tennis, basketball and handball courts, a synthetic turf field, softball fields, and a playground. Nearby Heckscher Park is an 18 acre oasis offering tennis courts, gardens a pond, and jogging trail. The Huntington Public Library,

Station Branch, has recently expanded in its current location to better provide services and programs to the community.

The Town of Huntington is also the only municipality in Suffolk County that operates and maintains a public transportation system for the benefit of its residents. Huntington Area Rapid Transit (HART) operates both regularly-scheduled fixed route buses for the general public as well as paratransit for persons with disabilities and non-driving seniors.

Huntington Station's Gateway Pedestrian Plaza was constructed in 2013 at the intersection of New York Avenue & Olive Street to replace and beautify a blighted NYS right-of-way property. The plaza features a public art installation of limestone sculptural benches and other seating areas.

Gateway Plaza (Figure 5) is under construction just behind the small pedestrian plaza. This development will provide the north side downtown area with new retail space, structured/elevated parking and 66 studio and one-bedroom rental units within walking/biking distance from the train station. The Northridge Development (Figure 6), which was completed in 2018, is fully rented, as well as the lower-level retail space. The developer has also purchased a dilapidated building next door, and has completely refurbished it, while maintaining its historic appeal, providing nine quality units for families. Additionally, plans have recently been approved to build 14 more units above retail space, with two of those units being affordable, and with a Veteran's preference. These projects have raised the bar for architectural design to follow in the downtown.



Figure 8 – Gateway Plaza Under construction



Figure 9 – Northridge

Gateway Gardens (figure 7), is a two acre oasis of 87 raised beds; 24 for children and 6 for adults with disabilities. In 2018, an additional parcel of property was transferred to the Town from the State, to accommodate the long list of gardeners, and enable more residents to participate in this community unification project.



Figure 10 - Gateway Gardens

The Teich farmhouse located at 12 Academy Place (Figure 8) was once part of a thriving Huntington Station dairy enterprise known as Hillside Dairy. As part the development of Gateway Park, the Town restored the farmhouse with a combination of local, federal and NYS CFA grant funds. In doing so, it has facilitated an adaptive-reuse of the structure to house public amenities and interpretive programming relevant to the early agricultural use and general history of Huntington Station. In early 2018, the Town granted the home historic status, and it will provide exhibit and meeting space, as well as a handicapped-accessible restroom for Gateway gardeners and other park-goers. The Community Development Agency was recognized in April of 2019 by the Town of Huntington Beautification Council with the Historic Preservation Beautification Award.



Figure 11- Teich Farmhouse – Before and After

5) 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 plan, transit-oriented development, non-discrimination laws, age-friendly policies, and a downtown management structure. If policies that support

livability and quality of life in downtown are not currently in place, describe near-term efforts by the municipality to create and implement such policies.

The Town's Horizons 2020 Master Plan encourages a mix of national, regional and local tenants as well as cultural and entertainment uses, specialty shopping, artists' lofts, other live-work spaces, and mixed-use buildings that act as anchors in downtown hamlet centers, especially older hamlets such as Huntington Station. In 2004, the Town Board enacted the Huntington Station Business Overlay District to promote such uses for its downtown redevelopment. The overlay district has helped spur many of these uses, even in the face of the economic downturn post 2007. It has also served to discourage incompatible uses in the downtown. Horizons 2020 also acknowledges that some "destinations such as schools and parks are not always well connected by sidewalks to surrounding neighborhoods" and makes recommendations for improving pedestrian and bicycle mobility. Transit-oriented and Huntington Station revitalization projects are also highly encouraged and are fast-tracked through Community Development. In 2017, the Huntington Town Board approved a measure to require that twenty (20) percent of apartments constructed in mixed-use buildings be affordable. The Community Development Agency (CDA) oversees the Town's affordable housing program through a lottery process, and has been able to assist residents in achieving the dream of homeownership that may not otherwise have been able to. The agency also enables existing low-income homeowners to renovate or repair their homes through the residential repair program, which is funded through the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

6) Public support. Describe the public participation and engagement process conducted to develop the DRI application, and the support of local leaders and stakeholders for pursuing a vision of downtown revitalization. Characterize the commitment among local leaders and stakeholders to preparing and implementing a strategic investment plan.

The Town of Huntington Economic Development Corporation, as well as the Town's Local Development Corporation, act as high level stakeholders and have been an integral part of development projects within the catchment area. Members of the Huntington Station Business Improvement District (BID) have a direct vested interest in seeing the community where they earn their livelihood flourish, and have long envisioned the revitalization of the downtown. Huntington Station is also fortunate to possess an active faith-based community of clergy leaders that interact with the Town as well as with not-for-profit leadership. Over the years, these stakeholders have successfully lobbied the Town for zoning changes, variances, approvals and many other actions that have been beneficial to the downtown. Their work assures socially, environmentally and economically responsible redevelopment ideas of the downtown.

The Town of Huntington Economic Development Corporation and the Huntington Station BID would facilitate and participate in a local DRI Planning Committee. The committee would be overseen by Leah M. Jefferson, the Director of the Town of Huntington Community Development Agency, and Executive Director of the Economic Development Corporation. Working in tandem would be Anthony Aloisio, Director of Planning and Environment; David Genaway, Deputy Director of Planning and Environment; Craig Turner, Principal Planner; and Sasha Abraham, Planner; along with staff from the Department of Planning and Environment. The skills and knowledge brought by these individuals, coupled with strong community support will be instrumental to the redevelopment of Huntington Station.

- 7) Transformative opportunities. Describe opportunities to build on the strengths described above by providing a list of transformative projects that could 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). Identify potential development opportunities, such as municipally-owned property that may be appropriate for redevelopment. Projects may be public or private, and could address economic development, transportation, housing, and community development needs. It should be recognized that if a DRI award is made to the downtown, the projects identified here, along with any others that may arise during the DRI planning process, will ultimately be vetted by the Local Planning Committee and the State to determine which projects receive DRI grants.**

To take advantage of the demographic strengths and recent economic investments associated with the revitalization of Downtown Huntington Station, it is necessary to address issues of public access, safety, appearance and constraints to development. As represented on Figure 2, the Town has conducted numerous field surveys which have identified opportunity areas where the proposed DRI strategies would be implemented. The following projects have been identified for the Residential Core and/or the Commercial Revitalization Core. The strategies are based upon both their broad community support and their potential to greatly contribute to the revitalization of the subject area. Significant progress would be achieved on many of these proposals within two (2) years through a cooperative effort involving the Town, community groups, property owners and the existing small business base.

RESIDENTIAL CORE/COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION CORE

Business Façade Designs and Improvements

In an effort to help our small businesses (re)invest in their commercial space in both core areas, the Town will establish a Huntington Station Small Business Façade Improvement Program in

cooperation with the Huntington Economic Development Corporation (EDC), and the Huntington Station BID. The Town Board has adopted building design standards specifically for Huntington Station prepared by the Town Planning Department based on building scale, through active and observant ground floors, historic compatibility, architectural composition and materials. The design guidelines will be applied to applicants seeking assistance for projects to revitalize façades in the DRI area.

The DRI funds will be utilized to provide grants or to establish a revolving loan fund to underwrite project costs for small businesses or property owners in the target area who want to renovate the exteriors of their commercial property in accordance with the adopted Huntington Station Design Guidelines. Grant funding received from ESD in 2018 for feasibility studies and development plans will be used, and the Town will be applying for additional funding to be applied to both areas through ESD and the New York Main Street Program.

RESIDENTIAL CORE

PROMOTE PUBLIC ACTIVITIES AND IMPROVE SAFETY

Develop Walking Path at Recharge Basin

A large Town-owned recharge basin sits at the corner of New York Avenue and Olive Street north of the LIRR station and just south of Gateway Gardens. The Town would invest in the creation of a public walking path around the recharge basin, opening the land up as a public amenity while providing a place of recreation and refuge for local residents and visitors of all ages to the area. Signage and public art could be incorporated along the pathway. It would also serve as a natural extension of Gateway Gardens, adding an attractive amenity and increasing walkability.

Pedestrian Refuge and Enhancements

Currently, sections of New York Avenue north of the LIRR station are difficult or dangerous to traverse. The intersection at the corner of New York Avenue and Olive Street in particular is very large and unsafe for pedestrians. A pedestrian island and median extension along with new crosswalks would greatly increase safety and allow those on foot to navigate the street simply and easily, while addressing issues of confusion, long distances, lack of visibility and excessive vehicular speeds. By creating a safe zone for pedestrians at this location and further south to allow for pedestrian crossing near the proposed artists' lofts, this area would become more attractive and safe for residents and visitors while enhancing the connection between the two core zones north and south of the train station.

COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION CORE

PROMOTE PUBLIC ACTIVITIES AND PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

Develop Public Plaza

Downtown Huntington Station lacks a public gathering space sufficient in size to provide for small concerts and art shows, night-time movies, and other public events that would foster community pride and attract local residents and customers to the Downtown. The Town has identified a number of properties that are ideally located south of the train station approximately 12,000 sq. ft. or more in the target area that could be acquired utilizing the Town's Open Space acquisition program (EOSPA). The DRI grant would be used to fund the necessary improvements in order for the plaza to serve as a social and cultural "village square" of Downtown Huntington Station.

The plaza would also complement the area and support downtown businesses during daytime hours by offering a location for customers to have lunch or an opportunity to engage with fellow residents in various social activities.

Streetscape Improvements and Pocket Parks

A field review of the Huntington Station Commercial District has revealed a number of opportunities to located small public green spaces and augments existing streetscape improvements that would promote community pride and foster social interaction. A variety of amenities including but not limited to garden areas, benches, art work, sidewalk improvements, lighting and street trees would significantly improve the visual aesthetics of Downtown Huntington Station. The Town would partner with the Huntington Station Business Improvement District to earmark grant funds for the needed public improvements. Specifically, a focus on establishing public fund to sponsor art projects could greatly benefit the aesthetic and visually appeal along the main commercial corridors in the target area.

IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESS AND SAFETY

Develop Integrated Security Program

The Town of Huntington is in the process of developing options for technology-based security models to increase public safety throughout the Huntington Station Business District (HSBD). Modeled after "blue-light" security programs on college campuses nationwide, this is an ongoing

effort with Huntington Station business consortiums and local community groups to spur business development and improve overall quality of life issues for local residents and merchants.

Our security program would include “blue-light” technology kiosks as an economical and efficient way to serve the community in providing both services and information. The Town has deployed Q-Alert, a web-based complaint management system in order to execute immediate action and track the status of each case filed in the system. Kiosk platforms are well-suited to support this function as well as provide instructions on accessing Town services.

Off-street Municipal Parking Plan

Municipal parking is currently limited, visually obscured and not inviting from a safety perspective. The Town has already identified potential sites that could be designed with appropriate signage, lighting and physical improvements that would complement the existing businesses along New York Avenue and attract new business in vacant or underutilized sites. There are also opportunities to work with existing private parking locations that are currently underutilized and do not allow for general public access. Earlier this year, the Town purchased a lot from Suffolk County on the corner of New York Avenue and Pulaski for the purpose of increasing available parking in the area. Shared parking agreements could be structured for such properties to allow for public access in exchange for municipal support that would fund improvements necessary to attract the general public.

Transportation Infrastructure and Complete Streets

Currently, circulation through the New York Avenue corridor is congested and not conducive to pedestrians or bicycle mobility. A variety of actions are needed to encourage walkability and increase the safety and attractiveness of the downtown. With the New York Complete Streets Act as guidance, the Town will utilize funding from the DRI grant to analyze signalization issues in cooperation with the New York State Department of Transportation. In addition, the Town will develop plans to improve pedestrian crossings with brightly colored crosswalks and audible street signals, establish clear signage and wayfinding in the downtown, identify locations for bicycle lanes and racks, and improve and upgrade public parking along with ADA accessibility.

The complete streets plan recommendations ultimately will result in infrastructure costs related to signage, pavement markings, equipment installations or other capital projects. It is the intention to utilize the DRI grant to fund a share of the planned improvements in conjunction with other interested parties.

PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF INFILL HOUSING ALONG THE COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION CORE

Sanitary Waste Program

The C-6 Overlay Zone along the New York Avenue Corridor currently allows mixed use development with business use on the first floor and residential apartments on the second and third floors. As noted earlier, the Town has recently been successful in generating mixed use projects north of the train station aided by the presence of sanitary sewers. The planned extension of sewer lines into the Commercial Revitalization Core will facilitate the development of infill housing along with new business development within this area.

However, it would benefit some properties in the Commercial Revitalization Core that may not have access to sewers in the immediate future to institute a program that would promote mix-use developments and spur revitalization. There are a number of commercial buildings in the core that have second floors that could be converted to apartments or that are currently used residentially but are in poor condition. In other cases, limited residential could be constructed above single-story business uses in accordance with existing zoning. Newer technologies for local sanitary removal in conjunction with the Town's TDFR program would be helpful to move such projects forward today. A grant program would be enacted utilizing DRI funds that would facilitate the utilization of newer sanitary waste removal technologies by property owners in this core area with the objective of developing affordable housing at key locations

8) Administrative Capacity. Describe the existing local administrative capacity to manage this planning and implementation initiative, including the ability to oversee contracts for awarded municipal projects using existing staff and resources.

The administrative capacity to manage this initiative is extensive and includes officials in the Town Supervisor's Office, The Huntington Community Development Agency, Department of Planning & Environment, Town Attorney's Office, Department of Engineering, and the Town of Huntington Economic Development Corporation, which have been working collaboratively to administer and manage the ongoing redevelopment effort as defined in the Development Strategy adopted by the Town Board in June of 2013. Town representatives from each of the departments listed above comprise a working group that meets regularly with the development community to monitor and to allocate Town resources as needed to keep projects moving forward. Town staff also meets internally in between working group meetings to communicate, coordinate and collaborate on projects in need of action and management.

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

The Town of Huntington is well prepared for this long awaited revitalization of Huntington Station. Downtown Huntington Station has a rich history as a vibrant, successful downtown and has made great strides towards returning to its former glory as an economic engine and heart of the

community since the days of urban renewal. DRI assistance, coupled with the coming LIRR investments, ongoing and planned commercial and residential development, would serve as a catalyst to bring back Downtown Huntington Station as a prosperous, walkable, inviting community that would serve as a model Long Island downtown.

SUBMISSION

Applications from interested communities must be submitted electronically to the relevant Regional Economic Development Council at the email address in the table below. Proposals for areas within New York City must be sent to the relevant Office of the Borough President, which will select two applications for submission to the NYC Regional Economic Development Council.

- Capital Region NYS-CapitalDist@esd.ny.gov
Counties: Albany, Columbia, Greene, Saratoga, Schenectady, Rensselaer, Warren, Washington
- Central New York NYS-CentralNY@esd.ny.gov
Counties: Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego
- Finger Lakes NYS-FingerLakes@esd.ny.gov
Counties: Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates
- Long Island LIREDC@esd.ny.gov
Counties: Nassau, Suffolk
- Mid-Hudson NYS-MidHudson@esd.ny.gov
Counties: Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester
- Mohawk Valley NYS-MohawkVal@esd.ny.gov
Counties: Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Oneida, Otsego, Schoharie
- North Country NYS-NorthCountry@esd.ny.gov
Counties: Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence
- Southern Tier NYS-SouthernTier@esd.ny.gov
Counties: Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins
- Western New York NYS-WNY-REDC@esd.ny.gov
Counties: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Niagara
- New York City - Submit to the appropriate office below.
 - Bronx: James Rausse at JRausse@bronxbp.nyc.gov
 - Brooklyn: Josh Levin at JoshuaLevin@brooklynbp.nyc.gov
 - Manhattan: Elka Morety at EMorety@manhattanbp.nyc.gov

- Queens: Shurn Anderson at SAnderson@queensbp.org
- Staten Island: Lashay S. Young at LYoung@statenislandusa.com



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

COMMITTEES
Aging
Banks
Economic Development, Job Creation,
Commerce and Industry
Energy
Insurance
Veterans' Affairs

STEVE STERN
Assemblyman 10th District
Suffolk County

DISTRICT OFFICE
95 Broad Hollow Rd., Ste. 100
Melville, New York 11747
631-271-8025
FAX: 631-424-5984

ALBANY OFFICE
Room 919
Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248
518-455-5732
FAX: 518-455-5553

EMAIL
sterns@nyassembly.gov

May 31, 2019

Mr. Kevin Law and Mr. Stuart Rabinowitz
Regional Co-Chairs
Long Island Regional Economic Development Council
150 Motor Parkway, Suite 311
Hauppauge, NY 11788

Dear Co-Chairs Law and Rabinowitz:

As the State Assemblyman representing the 10th Assembly District, I am writing to urge the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council (LIREDC) to act favorably on the application submitted by the Town of Huntington for a \$10 million grant through the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI).

The DRI program provides critical funding to help communities on the cusp of economic revitalization enter into sustained prosperity. The funding literally transforms communities into vibrant neighborhoods that are ripe for redevelopment, business, job creation and housing diversity. Simply put, the DRI is an important tool for municipalities seeking to revitalize their downtowns.

To that end, the Town of Huntington recently submitted an application to the LIREDC to be considered for Round Three of the DRI program. The application in question pertains to the Downtown Huntington Station area. As the State Assemblyman representing the hamlet of Huntington Station, I can say with certitude that a \$10 million DRI grant would be a game-changer on every level for this community.

The Huntington Station application meets all of the DRI criteria and contains all of the key ingredients needed for successful downtown revitalization including: a clear vision for the downtown; goals and strategies to accomplish this vision; and, a detailed plan to implement the transformative projects that have been identified. The vision and projects detailed in the application have all had the strong and unwavering support of the local community for many years. These projects include:

- the development of a public plaza
- improvements to business facades and building designs
- streetscape improvements
- the creation of new pocket parks
- an integrated security program for local businesses
- an off-street municipal parking plan
- plans to improve pedestrian crossings and encourage walkability

These projects are vital to enhancing our quality of life, local economy and precious environment in Huntington Station. I proudly support the Town of Huntington's ongoing revitalization efforts and strongly urge the LIREDC to approve and support this important initiative.

As always, if you have any questions, or if I can be of assistance to you in any way, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Stern". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steve" and last name "Stern" clearly distinguishable.

Steve Stern

SS/jl

cc: Ms. Cara Longworth, Regional Director, LIREDC

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COUNTY OF SUFFOLK

WILLIAM R. SPENCER
LEGISLATOR 18TH DISTRICT

CHAIR
HEALTH COMMITTEE

VICE-CHAIR
WAYS & MEANS

MEMBER
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE



15 PARK CIRCLE, SUITE 209
CENTERPORT, N.Y.
11721

PHONE: (631) 854-4500
FAX: (631) 854-4503

EMAIL: william.spencer@suffolkcountyny.gov

May 31, 2019

Stuart Rabinowitz, Co-Chair
Kevin Law, Co-Chair
Long Island Regional Economic Development Council
150 Motor Parkway
Hauppauge, NY 11788

RE: Huntington Station Revitalization

Dear Co-Chairs Rabinowitz, Law and Committee members:

I am writing in support of the Huntington Community Development Agency's application for Round IV of the NYS Downtown Revitalization grant for Huntington Station. Huntington Station is on its way to returning to the thriving, diverse and walkable downtown it once was. This grant will boost the current efforts that are underway to revitalize the community and help reverse decades of disinvestment and blight.

In recent years, Huntington Station has received much needed attention from a network of stakeholders including community organizations, the Town of Huntington, Suffolk County, New York State and private developers. These relationships have produced an array of improvements benefitting Huntington Station including land use plans, investment in infrastructure, public outreach groups that have coalesced strong public support for future development and the construction of a mixed use building that incorporates smart growth principals. In addition, I was able to secure funding for the county to conduct a feasibility report for sewer infrastructure for the Huntington Station Hub area to help improve the business district, housing opportunities and the environment.

With significant momentum already in place, funding from the Round IV of the NYS Downtown Revitalization program would undoubtedly fast-track Huntington Station's revitalization efforts. The strategies laid out in the application such as development of a public plaza, streetscape improvements, pocket parks, municipal parking and enhanced security will have a transformative impact to Huntington Station.

It is my hope that you will see the wonderful value in this project. This focused effort will go a long way in helping Huntington Station to overcome substantial challenges and will enable the community to live up to its maximum potential. Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

William R. Spencer, M.D.
Suffolk County Legislator
18th Legislative District



May 28, 2019

Chairman Kevin Law and
Chairman Stuart Rabinowitz
New York State Economic Development Council
Long Island Region
150 Motor Parkway
Hauppauge, New York 11788

Dear Chairman Law and Chairman Rabinowitz,

I am writing in support of the Town of Huntington's application for funding under the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative: Round 4.

It is my understanding that this project seeks to tap the maximum award of \$10,000,000 to support the area of downtown Huntington Station. In 1965, Huntington Station went through urban renewal and the community has since felt a great level of disinvestment. Throughout the years, the Town of Huntington has undertaken several efforts in order to revitalize the hamlet, including 2 housing developments, creating a community garden and a public plaza, as well as brick sidewalks and other improvements.

In addition, for more than 7 years, Renaissance Downtowns (RD), as the designated Master Developer of Huntington Station, and the Town of Huntington have been working together under a public-private partnership towards revitalizing this hamlet.

Renaissance has invested more than \$4 million in its efforts thus far and has garnered more than \$30 million of private investment funds for the revitalization of Huntington Station through co-planning efforts with the Town and the community. As part of concept plans developed for the sewerred areas of Huntington Station, with the community, the Town and RD, 5 immediate opportunity development projects were envisioned: (1) Northridge: a \$5 million mixed-use building with approximately 5500 square feet (SF) of commercial and 16 one bedroom apartments that was completed in May 2018; (2) Gateway: a \$22 million mixed-use building with approximately 14000 SF of commercial and 66 apartments currently under development and slated to be completed in the Fall of 2020; (3) a 140 key hotel and office space with up to 100,000SF adjacent to it; and (4) a 49 unit artist loft building.



Renaissance Downtowns at Huntington Station LLC

While we have been able to achieve great momentum and success in the sewered areas, we know the limits posed by a lack of funding. The DRI grant would provide much needed resources to be able to continue necessary planning and implementation of revitalization efforts, and to help small business owners and community members thrive.

Huntington Station is on the precipice of becoming the vibrant, walkable community it once was. Ten million dollars would go a long way to make this a reality, and spur additional growth beyond the catchment area. I strongly encourage you to support this grant application.

Very Truly Yours,

Ryan Porter
Partner, Renaissance Downtowns