

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE – LIREDC

Due on Friday, May 20, 2016 to LIREDC@esd.ny.gov

BASIC INFORMATION

Municipality Name: Town of Islip

Downtown Name: Central Islip

County: Suffolk

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

Central Islip has a compact traditional downtown located along Carleton Avenue directly south of the Main Line of the LIRR. Its Main Street character began as an outgrowth of its proximity to the original Central Islip train station prior to its relocation. Major redevelopment of the former Psychiatric Hospital has occurred in recent years that has brought investment, new businesses, and over 1,800 residences and 250 hotel rooms just outside the downtown. There is potential to tap into this influx of new activity as well as existing institutions to foster vibrance and vitality in the downtown.

DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

This section should be filled out with reference to the criteria set forth in the DRI Guidelines.

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

The downtown neighborhood is located along Carleton Avenue (CR 17) from Suffolk Avenue (CR 100) and the LIRR southwards to Smith Street.

Additionally a Planned Urban Development (PUD) exists to the south of the central business district consisting of the former Central Islip Psychiatric Center, also located along Carleton Avenue from Smith Street to the Southern State Parkway. Supporting retail, a middle school, and garden apartments exist to the immediate north of the downtown.

Attach color map clearly identifying areas within the defined downtown.



		<h3>Central Islip Downtown Area Map</h3>	<p>Town of Islip Geographic Information System Drawn by: CCD P#: 1 Date: 05/19/2016</p> <p><small>Not intended for legal use. Data source and may be amended at any time without notice. All other photographs or details displayed herein are the property of the County of Suffolk. This map is a computer-generated graphic and is not a substitute for a professional map. It is for general information only. Data source may appear on this map, but is not a guarantee, warranty, or endorsement of any kind by the Town of Islip.</small></p>	
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- 5) Attractiveness of the Downtown.** Identify the properties or characteristics the downtown possesses that contribute or could contribute, if enhanced, to the attractiveness and livability of the downtown. Consider, for example, the presence of developable mixed-use spaces, housing at different levels of affordability and type, healthy and affordable food markets, walkability and bikeability, and public parks and gathering spaces.

The traditional downtown character promotes walkability due to its compact length and street grid, buildings with an active street presence, and potential to increase mixed-use development. Opportunities exist to create public spaces and/or significant developments on publicly-owned property. Ample access is available to affordable food markets just outside the traditional downtown area. The downtown draws from significant housing diversity ranging from multifamily apartments, condominiums and townhouses as well as hotels and the potential for college dormitories. Significant gathering areas include LI Ducks Stadium, a golf course, a Fire Fighters Museum under construction, amphitheater, and an arts center. Various parks exist in the PUD.

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

The Town currently employs a capital improvement program for streetscape improvements. A significant portion of the zoning allows for mixed-use development and the underlying development of the downtown would support additional zoning amendments to accommodate additional mixed-use and greater density. The ability to connect to the Southwest Sewer district would further assist in obtaining additional density. The downtown is close to rail and bus service which can increase its desirability as a place to live. The Town has further adopted a Complete Streets Policy to improve alternatives to automobile use and encourage multi-modal transportation.

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

The Central Islip Civic Council and Chamber of Commerce have been supportive and actively engaged for decades in past efforts to revitalize the area. The Central Islip Coalition of Good Neighbors has been an advocate of improving the quality of life of the residents. Keep Islip Clean further contributes to the maintenance and beautification of public spaces in the downtown. There are long standing programs in place for youth, including Youth Enrichment Services and the Police Athletic League which have many programs and activities along with the traditional little leagues & Town programs. The initial local lead for the program will be Ron Meyer, Commissioner of Planning and Development for the Town of Islip.

- 8) Other.** Provide any other information you feel would be relevant to help this committee to make an informed decision to nominate this downtown for a DRI award.

The Town of Islip has committed considerable resources to draw additional investment and positive development to this area and these efforts have demonstrated many successes. However, the redevelopment in the PUD and the blight removal by the award-winning (and read into the Congressional record) College Woods neighborhood has not resulted in significant growth of the

traditional downtown area. The downtown has the potential to draw in additional private investment to expand its catchment area and leverage patronage from residents of bordering hamlets which lack substantial downtowns of their own.

9) Identify. Current infrastructure challenges or other impediments facing downtown development initiatives.

The downtown lacks a direct sewer connection which impedes the density necessary for a vibrant downtown. Some sections do not have convenient access to public parking. The downtown lacks a direct pedestrian route to the train station which limits the synergy this facility could provide. There are no dedicated bicycle routes which further limits this as an alternative transportation option. Additionally the lack of access to convenient bus routes hinder buses as an option for employees and potential residents.

10) Describe. How an existing downtown master plan (if it exists) could coordinate and optimize available resources through a revitalization initiative.

The current draft downtown study funded through NYS and prepared by Saratoga Associates has identified opportunity sites for redevelopment throughout the current downtown. It promotes traditional downtown character and incorporates modern zoning techniques to achieve the goal of a vibrant downtown. This plan builds upon the previously adopted and implemented Central Islip Hamlet Landscaping and Parking Plan, Central Islip Improvement Program, Hamlet Identity Plan for Central Islip, Community Development Plan for Carleton Park, Central Islip Master Plan and its 2005 Update, all of which serve as an active and contributory framework to coordinate and optimize available resources through a revitalization initiative.