



June 6, 2016  
Donna Howell  
Regional Director  
Southern Tier Regional Office  
Empire State Development  
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508  
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Donna:

Attached please find a revised copy of our application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant program.

This application was prepared by the Downtown Ithaca Alliance with input and collaboration from the City of Ithaca, Tompkins County, TCAD, the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce, the Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency, representatives from the private development community, and Cornell University.

We followed the outline in the solicitation but added a title page, section headers, an executive summary, and appendices for Council review. We have also added a link to a video featuring Mayor Myrick describing our interest and plan for this DRI program. That link can be found in the executive summary and in Part 8: Other.

If any additional information is required please, contact me at 607-277-8679 or [gary@downtownithaca.com](mailto:gary@downtownithaca.com).

We look forward to working with the Regional Council on this exciting opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Ferguson".

Gary Ferguson  
Executive Director  
Downtown Ithaca Alliance

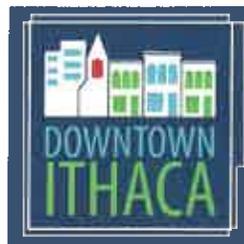
# DOWNTOWN ITHACA

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*Building a City for the Future*



**PREPARED BY:  
DOWNTOWN ITHACA ALLIANCE**



**ON BEHALF OF: THE CITY OF ITHACA | TOMPKINS COUNTY | CORNELL UNIVERSITY  
TOMPKINS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | TOMPKINS COUNTY AREA DEVELOPMENT (TCAD)**

# Downtown Ithaca Downtown Revitalization Initiative

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**DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE – DOWNTOWN TEMPLATE**  
**CLICK [HERE](#) FOR A FORM FILLABLE VERSION OF THIS**  
**DOCUMENT**

THIS TEMPLATE IS PROVIDED AS GENERAL GUIDANCE AND THE MINIMUM CRITERIA NECESSARY FOR THE REDCs TO EVALUATE AND SELECT A DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD. INDIVIDUAL REDCs MAY REQUEST ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS PART OF THEIR SELECTION PROCESS. PLEASE CHECK YOUR SPECIFIC REGIONAL COUNCILS WEBSITE FOR ADDITIONAL CRITERIA. [WWW.REGIONALCOUNCILS.NY.GOV](http://WWW.REGIONALCOUNCILS.NY.GOV)

**BASIC INFORMATION**

**Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region:** Southern Tier Region

**Municipality Name:** Ithaca

**Downtown Name:** Downtown Ithaca

**County:** Tompkins County

## DOWNTOWN ITHACA

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

### **Executive Summary**

In Ithaca we are building New York's city of tomorrow, the place where millennials want to live and retirees want to call home. We are doing this without gimmicks and silver bullet projects. Creating the dynamic downtown of tomorrow cannot happen with one idea or one emphasis. It requires the convergence of many different approaches, projects, and programs- a complete package. Downtown must be a desirable place to live, a preferred place to work or to locate businesses, and it must be the region's place to play- to enjoy and partake in the best of urban arts and entertainment. It needs to be accessible, walkable, well connected with its surrounding neighborhoods and the region, attractive and clean, safe, and memorable.

We are leveraging our strongest assets, our education economy, and our extraordinary natural beauty to attract both knowledge/creative economy workers as well as visitors/tourists who want to either live or visit our downtown.

Building upon the exciting success of REV, our Cornell administered community incubator program located in heart of Downtown, we are focused on making Downtown a desirable place for knowledge and creative economy businesses and their workers to thrive and grow. Since the opening of REV, three businesses have already graduated into the Downtown, occupying space and adding to the knowledge economy of Downtown. With REV we see several dozen start-up enterprises readying themselves for a launch into the community. We see Cornell and Ithaca College students opting to remain in Ithaca to pursue their careers and dreams in entrepreneurship. We see people coming to Ithaca from across the country and across the globe to conduct research at Cornell and to populate our businesses. They want and expect a “city for the future” and a world class downtown.

Today we have over 15,000 in-commuters to Ithaca/Tompkins County each day. According to the 2010 Census Transportation Planning Package, the Downtown area itself had 5,612 total jobs with 44.6% of these jobs filled by workers from other counties, many of them Southern Tier counties. This massive influx of workers from the region underscores the importance of Ithaca to the region and its reliance on a regional workforce to fill our job base.

While our trajectory is strong, our infrastructure is not keeping up with our momentum. In our downtown, infrastructure is the skeleton from which every project, development, and program hangs. To us, downtown infrastructure covers a broad range-

- Parking facilities;
- Street lighting and sidewalk amenities
- Pedestrian corridor connections
- Housing
- Core tourism infrastructure, such as a conference/meeting center
- Key arts & entertainment
- Even provisions for shared trash and recycling compacting

For example, in Ithaca we need places for people to live, and this is especially the case in Downtown. Given our chronic need, we consider housing a type of basic infrastructure for our desired city for the future. Based on a just completed market study, we have an 1.8% vacancy rate Countywide for housing. Downtown is the fastest growing, highest demand locale. With Cornell’s plan to increase consistently increase enrollment, the need for housing is increasing even more. We are proposing and seeking projects to build more housing for the knowledge workers and their families we currently wish to retain and those we are attracting. Our proposed housing projects can add nearly 600 new units in the heart of downtown.

Not all workers will opt to live in Ithaca or even Tompkins County. A recent study showed Ithaca to be the eighth most expensive place for families to live in the nation. While people are coming to Ithaca and we are showing population growth, a number of our workers will opt to live in Southern Tier counties and commute to Ithaca.

We are also building our Ithaca brand near and far to attract visitors and tourists, not just during peak seasons but year round. We are expanding the mix of people visiting Ithaca, well beyond the traditional Cornell affiliated visitor. Downtown has become a must see attraction, equal to Cornell and our waterfalls/gorges as a destination for tourists. Our visitors also tend to travel around the region, visiting other nearby attractions. We are seeking projects that will capitalize on our expanding collection of Downtown hotels and lodging rooms such as a conference/meeting facility to help drive mid-week business, a new Heritage Education and Tourism Center, and enhancements to the historic State Theatre.

We have entered into this Downtown Revitalization (DRI) Initiative process by convening a group of community economic development stakeholders from the Downtown, the private sector, the City, the County, Cornell University, the Chamber, and TCAD. We have initially identified a set of project proposals that could be included in a DRI program. These projects comprise two subsets: (1) projects that address infrastructure deficiencies and can set the table for substantial private sector growth and (2) private sector projects that help us build our city of tomorrow.

Collectively, these projects are expected to cost \$214 million. When \$10 million is used to stimulate this growth, the leverage ratio is 21:1.

Ithaca is poised to take that next step, to ramp up its efforts to utilize the prowess of Cornell and Ithaca College to make a knowledge-based Downtown that will be a beacon for creative business and workers across the State and the nation. We are poised to expand our tourism capacity, to attract more visitors, and more conferences and meeting, and share these visitors with our region.

To be successful we will need to address our infrastructure deficiencies and make sure our collection of projects have the gap filling resources needed to move forward. This is our proposal for the DRI: to use our work to date and the needed DRI grant award to move aggressively forward on New York State's city of the future.

To view a short video featuring Mayor Svante Myrick made especially for this DRI application, please click on the following link:

[https://youtu.be/8OAHi3KC\\_yM](https://youtu.be/8OAHi3KC_yM)

**DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE SUMMARY OF POSSIBLE PROJECTS**

<i>Name</i>	<i>\$ Invested</i>	<i>Hsg Units</i>	<i>Hotel Rms</i>	<i>Perm Jobs</i>	<i>Const Jobs</i>	<i>Retail SF</i>	<i>Office SF</i>	<i>Other SF</i>	<i>Tot SF</i>
201-207 N. Aurora	10,000,000	35		20	75	5000			40,000
Winter Village Trail					20				
Seneca St. Drive Thru Site	20,000,000	130		20	100	8000			80,000
202 The Commons	4,000,000	33		10	20	5000			33,584
Green Street Parking Garage					30				
City Centre on the Commons	50,000,000	250		30	100	10,000		9,000	200,000
Downtown Conference Center	15,000			50	20			15,000	15,000
Harold's Square	36,000,000	86		90	100	11,410	14,460		136,049
Downtown Loan Fund	250,000								
Tompkins County Heritage Center	5,000,000			5	25	2000	10000	10000	22,000
Tompkins Financial Headquarters	30,000,000			300	100	5000	105,000		110,000
Canopy by Hilton	24,000,000		123	47	100	2,000			74,475
State Theatre	1,000,000			2	10	1000			1,000
Journal Building	1,000,000			25	15	5,000	5,000		10,000
DeWitt House	30,000,000	60		5	100	4000		2000	72,500
Cayuga Street Infrastructure	250,000				10				
Elmira Savings Bank	2,700,000			20	20	2,210	2,210		4,420
<u>Totals</u>	<u>214,215,000</u>	<u>594</u>	<u>123</u>	<u>624</u>	<u>845</u>	<u>60,620</u>	<u>136,670</u>	<u>36,000</u>	<u>799,028</u>

## **Downtown Identification**

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

## **Part 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.*

For this grant, we have defined downtown Ithaca as our 22-block central business improvement district (BID), as well as adjacent blocks able to accept additional downtown area growth.

A map that details this definition of downtown is attached. These abutting growth areas (all walkable to other parts of downtown) are: the entire 300 North Cayuga Street block (which includes the old County library redevelopment site); parts of the 300 block of South Cayuga Street (which includes a car dealership site); and an additional four blocks of West State/MLK Street, which is a downtown growth corridor ripe for development.

This definition is important for Downtown Ithaca and the Southern Tier because it recognizes the historic importance of our central core while simultaneously making space for future urban growth opportunities that will complement existing properties and businesses. As Downtown Ithaca grows, we want to be certain we have well located real estate capable of supporting future development.

These boundaries encompass some of the city's and region's most unique urban treasures -- the Ithaca Commons pedestrian mall, the historic DeWitt Mall and Park, Press Bay Alley, Restaurant Row, the Coltivare Culinary Arts Center, and the historic West End of downtown. This area contains over seventy retail businesses, sixty food and beverage businesses, thirty-five service businesses, and approximately 400 office, professional, and tech businesses. The area contains the historic State Theatre, soon to be four major hotels, a downtown cinema, the regionally renowned Kitchen Theater, a charter high school, a 70,000 SF public library sited in a former department store, the Ithaca branch of Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3), and the Finger Lakes School of Massage. Over 3,000 employees work in the 22-block BID and nearly 10,000 people are employed within a one mile walking distance of the Commons.

DRI Downtown Ithaca boundaries:

<https://gallerynightithaca.files.wordpress.com/2016/05/map.pdf>

## Part 2: Downtown Size

*Outline why the downtown, or its catchment area, is of a size sufficient to support a vibrant, year-round downtown, with consideration of whether there is a sizeable existing, or increasing, population within easy reach for whom this would be the primary downtown.*

Downtown Ithaca is a regional and upstate center for growth, with a large catchment area and a large visitor and employment base able to support and sustain future growth and development.

Downtown Ithaca is a regional center for commerce, transit travel, shopping and dining, and the arts. The downtown/urban core is surrounded on all sides by residential neighborhoods and this proximity makes pedestrian and bike access to downtown easy and commonplace. According to a 2015 Nielsen Company report, 22,568 people reside within a one mile ring of the Commons. With a walk score of 96-97 (out of a possible 100), downtown Ithaca readily accommodates and attracts commerce, urban living, and tourism. Indeed, over 40% of Ithacans walk to work – one of the highest rates in the United States.

Along with the large walking population to Downtown, Nielsen also reported that there are 59,789 people who live within the five mile ring of Downtown. This is the urbanized area of Tompkins County and a catchment area for most downtown businesses. There are also 216,220 people residing in a 25 mile ring of Downtown, an area that includes all of Tompkins County plus portions of abutting counties. This is our market trade area catchment zone, where most of our local sales and customer base is derived. This catchment does not include tourists and regional employees who drive into Downtown from beyond the 25 mile ring.

Downtown, Cornell, and Ithaca College serve as major employment hubs for a multi-county region, including much of the Southern Tier. According to MPO statistics, over 15,000 people commute from other counties into Ithaca on a daily basis. Those same statistics show that 44.6% of our Downtown workforce comes from outside Tompkins County, much of that from Southern Tier counties.

Tompkins County Commuter Map:

<https://gallerynightithaca.files.wordpress.com/2016/05/workflow.pdf>

Due to our unique geography of Cayuga Lake and three hills, all major state routes funnel into downtown Ithaca. We have not built a bypass around downtown, meaning all major traffic must travel through our downtown target area each day.

Downtown Ithaca serves as the hub for the Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit system (TCAT), which logged 4.5 million rides in 2013. Several years ago, TCAT was selected as the best small city transit company in North America. TCAT's transit stations are adjacent to the pedestrian mall and connect to every town in the county and beyond. There is a special shuttle that connects Downtown with Cornell, providing 10 minute service between Downtown and

upstate New York's largest employer. Commuter buses have run daily from Schuyler County and Elmira and several bus companies offer frequent daily direct service from Ithaca to Binghamton and New York City.

We are actively engaged in transportation demand management (TDM) efforts to alleviate the need for additional parking and to help meet our energy savings/carbon reduction goals. Downtown is home to Ithaca Carshare, our locally created zipcar program. We are working on emergency ride home programs and remote parking strategies to encourage alternative transportation.

The demographics of Downtown Ithaca and its marketplace are strong assets for growth and development. These demographics can be categorized as employment, residents, visitors, and students.

#### Employment:

- 3,000 people work within three blocks of the Commons;
- Nearly 10,000 people work within walking distance (1 mile) of the Commons;

#### Residents:

- 1,100 people currently live in the BID, with at least 190 more housing units currently planned or under construction and more would come with the DRI grant;
- 22,370 people currently reside within ten blocks (one mile ) of the Commons

#### Visitors:

- According to a 2010 report by Chmura Economic Associates, downtown Ithaca had approximately 354,000 annual tourist visits six years ago. This figure has grown substantially since then and is being re-surveyed this year. (42% of all Tompkins County visitors visit downtown Ithaca).
- Downtown Ithaca and its unique pedestrian mall is tied with waterfalls/gorges and Cornell as the top visitor destination in the County.

#### Students:

- Cornell has 21,904 students who live both on campus and in the community. Downtown is a particularly popular residential location for graduate students.
- Ithaca College has 6,769 enrolled students in 2015/16. Many of these students live on nearby South Hill or in Downtown proper.
- Downtown also benefits from students attending the Ithaca extension branch of Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) and the recently relocated Finger Lakes School of Massage.

Ithaca and Tompkins County experienced population growth during the past decade. The City of Ithaca experienced 2.5% population growth from 2010-2014, with a sizeable portion of that growth due to downtown development.

Downtown Ithaca's 2020 Strategic Plan that calls for the addition of 1,500 housing units in the urban core from 2010-2020. For much of this decade our multi-family housing vacancy rate stood at 0.5%. Today that rate is at an equally low 1.8%, making the need for new housing projects substantial. A housing study commissioned by Tompkins County several years ago showed a need of 4,000 units of new housing at all price points to meet this extraordinary demand. To date, the community has only added approximately 2,000 units, leaving a backlog of demand for families at all income levels seeking housing in Ithaca.

Tompkins County Population Growth:

<http://ithacavoices.com/2015/05/which-tompkins-county-towns-are-growing-fastest/>

## **Part 3: Past Investments & Future Investment Potential**

*Describe how this downtown will be able to capitalize on prior, and catalyze future, private and public investment in the neighborhood and its surrounding areas.*

Downtown Ithaca is uniquely poised to capitalize on a record of growth and development over the past decade to create a city for the future able to serve knowledge and creative industry workers. This area has been able to overcome disinvestment to become one of New York's most attractive development locations. Cornell University has played a key role in the resurgence along with help from the State of New York and Federal government. With the help of the DRI program Downtown Ithaca is poised to make another leap forward in its efforts to be a city sought out by both millennials and retirees. For this DRI initiative, we have identified a list of potential projects that can help transform Downtown Ithaca into our desired city of tomorrow.

### Building from the Past

Less than a dozen years ago, Downtown Ithaca faced many of the same issues confounding cities across the Southern Tier and New York. Prior to 2004, downtown Ithaca was receiving little new private investment and nearly all growth and development was occurring on the edges of the community, in nearby suburbs, around the regional mall, and on arterial highways. Pre-2004 Downtown Ithaca had a 25% vacancy rate and little confidence in future prospects. Tompkins County was the only major entities investing in Downtown. The private sector was not interested in Downtown. The City was launching its southwest area for big box development initiative, which was expected to further strain the economy of downtown. By 2000, it was clear that a change in policy and emphasis was needed if Downtown Ithaca was to sustain itself and be relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

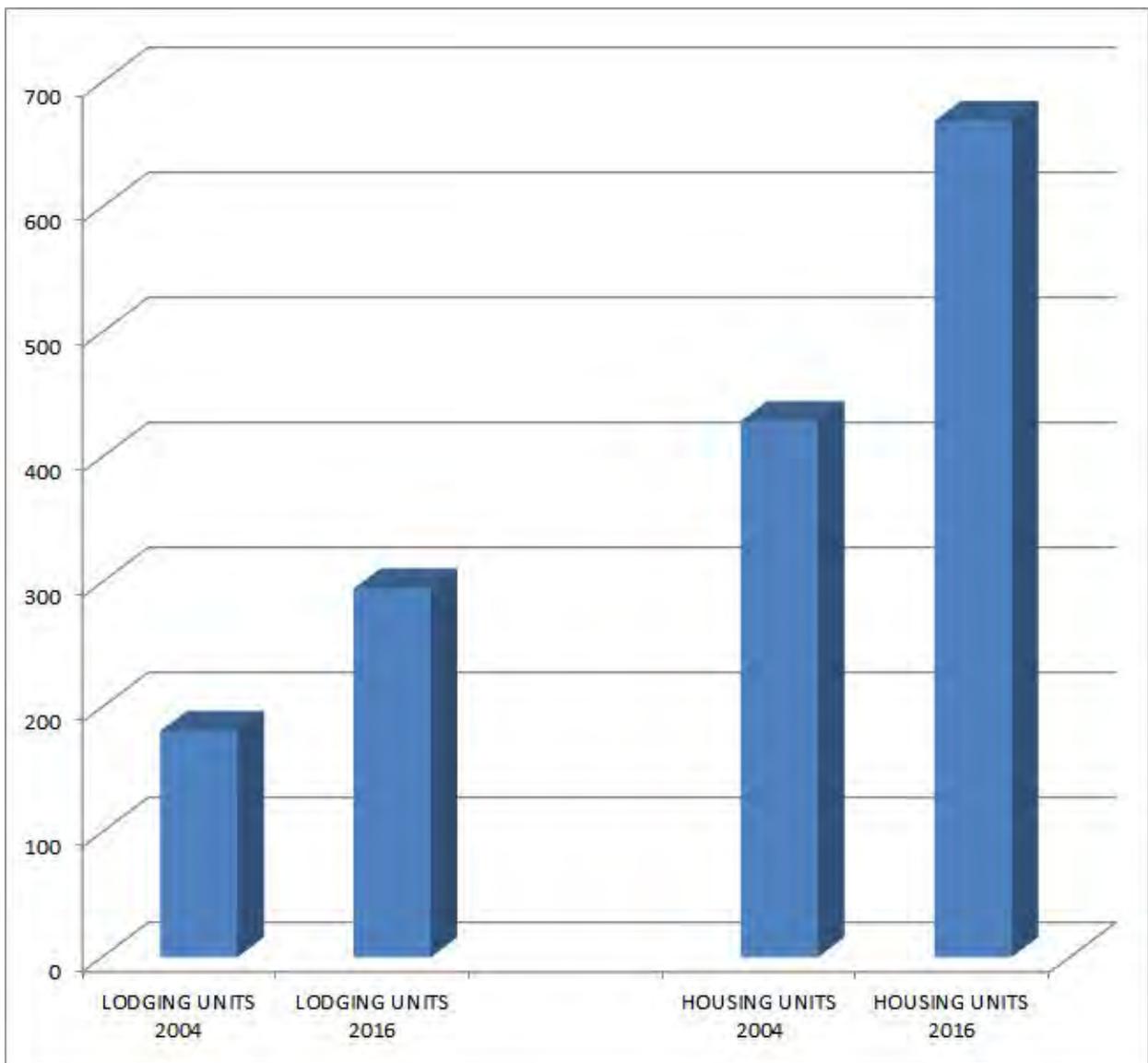
The community rallied behind efforts of City government and the Downtown BID to level the playing field for downtown growth and development. An innovative tax incentive program currently known as the Community Investment Incentive Tax Abatement program (CIITAP) was launched in 2001 in an effort to stimulate downtown growth by filling funding gaps in projects. The City and Cornell University came together to create the Seneca Place development project, bringing 300 white collar Cornell jobs, a Hilton Garden Inn, and street level retail to an underused block of downtown Ithaca.

Elsewhere in Downtown, City owned land previously used for parking lots in the southern section of downtown was made available for development, resulting in the creation of Cayuga Place and the Lofts at Six Mile Creek.

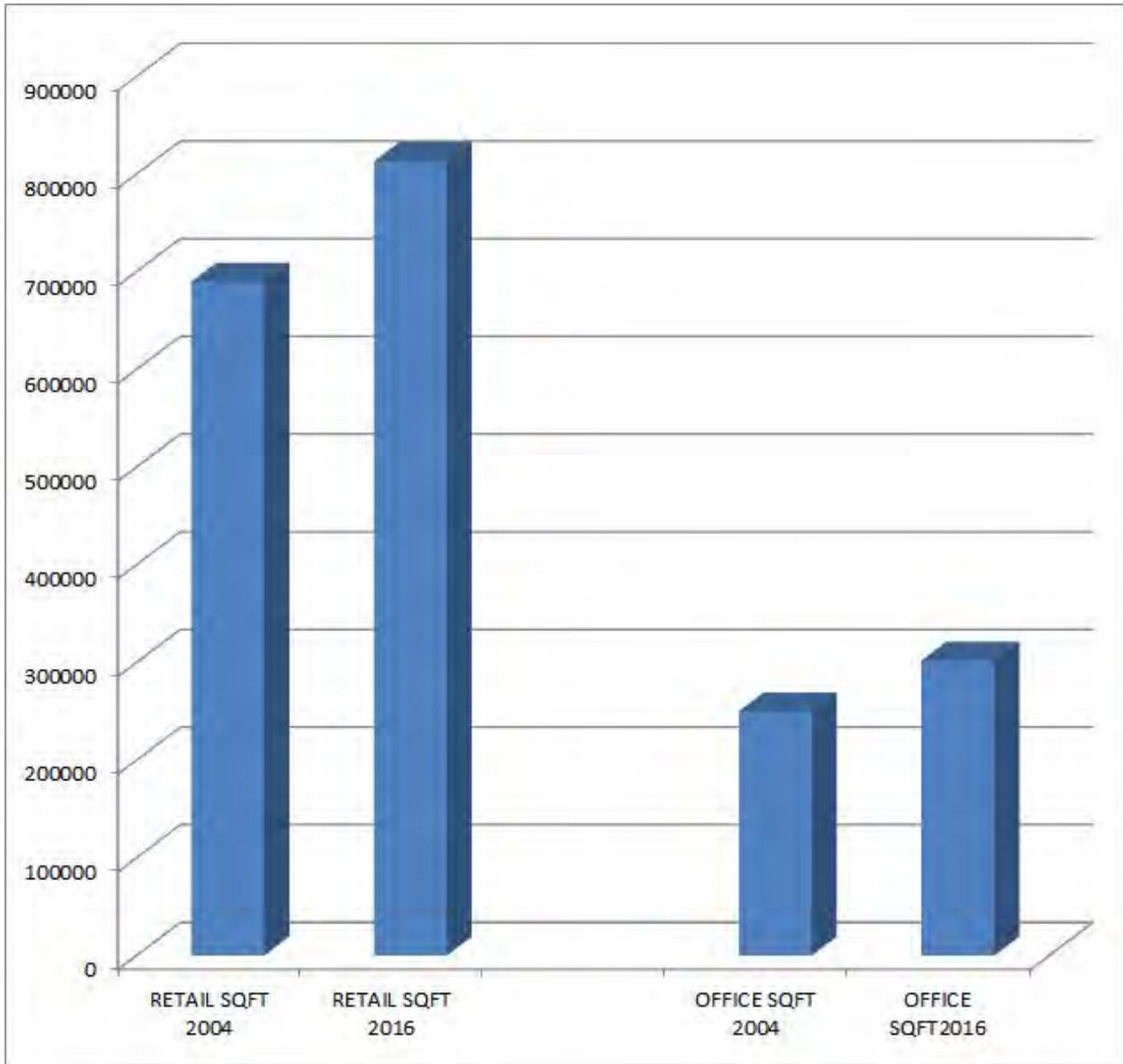
The efforts of the City, the BID, the County and TCAD (who manages the CIITAP program) bore fruit. Prior to the recession, Downtown Ithaca became a bright spot on the upstate New York landscape. During the period 2002-2011, Downtown gained 100 new residential units, 160,000 SF of new office space, 104 new hotel rooms, several large anchor retail spaces, and an aggregate \$96 million in total investment, most of it private. For the first time in a generation, development came to Downtown Ithaca.

The recession brought a halt to this development, stopping projects in their tracks. But, as 2010/11 rolled in, the appetite for renewed development was rekindled. From 2011-2016 Downtown Ithaca experienced \$75.3 million in private sector investment with the following growth and development totals: 20,100 SF of new retail; 97,500 SF of new office space; 169 additional hotel rooms; and 166 additional housing units.

The charts below depict the recent growth and development of Downtown Ithaca:



*Growth in Downtown Ithaca (2002/1016)*



*Growth in Downtown Ithaca (2004 - 2016)*

A Summary of Past Downtown Investments

Major past investments since the end of the great recession include:

- Breckenridge Place: a \$15 million project that created 50 units of affordable housing and was completed in 2013
- Lofts @ Six Mile Creek: an \$11 million project that created 45 units of market-rate housing completed in 2015
- Seneca Way Apartments: a \$13 project that created 38 units of market-rate apartments and 9,000 SF of office space

- Argos Inn: created 10 additional lodging units and redesigned the historic pub and bar on the ground floor
- Press Bay Alley: \$1 million renovation of the old Ithaca Journal building into 10,000 square feet of office space and the creation of micro retail units (approx. 300 SF/unit).
- Carey Building: \$4 million renovation and expansion of the historic Carey Building involving the construction of space for Rev Start-Up Works on the second floor and five stories containing 20 new housing units to be completed in Summer 2016.
- Rothschild Building: Renovation of second floor space to create 7,000 square feet of additional space to accommodate Miller Mayer LLP and the Finger Lakes School of Massage; both companies moved into the space in late 2015.
- Coltivare Tompkins Cortland Community College Educational Project: \$7 million construction of the first floor space below the Cayuga Street Garage into a culinary arts program, teaching site, and restaurant.
- Simeon's Building: This is a rebuild of a building destroyed by a runaway truck in 2015. The project is creating nine new housing units and a brand new two story restaurant and is scheduled for completion in late 2016.
- Marriott Hotel: This \$40 million major project is a 10 story 159 room full service Marriott Hotel that will anchor the eastern end of the Commons. The project is being developed by Urgo Hotels from Bethesda, MD and is scheduled for completion in late summer 2016.

In summary, Downtown Ithaca experienced growth in office, retail, lodging, and housing space since 2000:

- Available office space increased 17% from 2000-present and is projected to increase an additional 17% by 2020 (to 957,000 SF by 2020).
- Available retail space increased 20% since 2000 and is projected increase to 322,000 SF -- an additional 6% -- by 2020.
- Lodging units in downtown Ithaca increased from 181 in 2000 to 295 in 2016; the construction of the Marriott Hotel and Hilton Canopy Hotel will bring an additional 282 lodging units to downtown Ithaca by 2020.
- Housing units increased from 429 in 2000 to 669 in 2016. At least 120 units are in the pipeline to be constructed by 2020 and more are suggested in this DRI proposal.

### The Downtown Funding Gap

Every Downtown Ithaca project undertaken between 2004 and 2016 has required some form of subsidy and public support to move forward. Even though Ithaca benefits from strong housing and lodging demand, this demand is not sufficient on its own to make projects happen. There needs to be some form of gap filling support. Development in Downtown Ithaca is especially costly for the following reasons:

The blessing of a compact, walkable downtown is that it can become a dynamic pedestrian zone. The curse is that development must be creative and flexible to fit into such a compact

area. The recent Carey building is an excellent example: the project was a five story overbuild on top of an existing historic two story property. The costs of overbuilding were significant and were only overcome with support from the CIITAP tax incentive program and CFA funding for the anchor tenant REV, downtown's business entrepreneurship incubator. The 159-room full-service Marriott Hotel has been built on an 8,000 SF plot of ground, with virtually no space for staging. Construction was inordinately expensive—major foundation footers and a crane were required and materials had to be scheduled for day of use delivery. As difficult as each of these projects were, their impact to Downtown Ithaca were substantial.

Downtown Ithaca development is vertical. The small parcels and the infill nature of our projects necessitate building vertically not horizontally. This results in more expensive construction classifications and costlier projects. On the other hand, these vertical projects create a dense downtown core.

Downtown Ithaca property is expensive. Downtown's success has sparked an uptick in pricing for downtown properties. While beneficial to property owners, it compounds development difficulties, creating larger funding gaps. Downtown projects undergo intense public and community scrutiny because they are highly visible and will be iconic parts of the urban landscape. This, too, is costly as building site elements are refined.

While a handful of underutilized buildings remain, most projects involve new construction that is more expensive especially in an urban environment. New construction creates a need for higher residential and commercial rents. But these rents must be moderated by the regional marketplace, resulting in funding gaps that require either excessive equity or public subsidy.

The CIITAP tax incentive is beneficial to downtown projects but it requires developers to spend additional money on "community benefits." These community benefits, while important, are costly items that pertain to wages, local labor, diversity, sustainable buildings, and affordable housing.

Every Downtown Ithaca project over the past 12 years has required public subsidy and support. Due to Ithaca's strong residential and lodging markets, these subsidies are not as large as may be required in other Southern Tier cities. But projects all have funding gaps which, unless filled, make them unable to move forward.

In the past we have worked as a team identify and secure funding sources to cover these gaps. The programs most used were:

- The local CIITAP tax incentive program
- The New Market Tax Credit program
- City-funded and creatively structured land sales
- Historic preservation tax credits (RTCs)
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits and other Federal/State low income housing sources
- The NY Main Street program

- The NY Restore NY program
- The STREDC loan fund

Today this list has substantially shrunk:

- CIITAP incentives remain but community benefits have whittled away some of their fiscal value. Once Ithaca became a metropolitan city.
- New Market Tax Credits have become extremely hard to access. We now compete against NYC, Dallas, and Miami for access to these funds.
- Downtown City and County land has been expended, so creative land sales have ended.
- As we use up our remaining historic properties, RTCs become less useful.

For Ithaca to continue building a 21<sup>st</sup> century city, we need the assistance of other gap filling sources. DRI can be crucial to our next phase of growth and development in Downtown Ithaca.

Looking ahead, there is reason for considerable optimism. Downtown Ithaca has become a national brand known throughout the country as a bright spot for urban development; a place where we are using our assets to leverage growth; a place where we encourage growth for a downtown that people want to visit, desire to live in, and prefer to work.

Just released data from a Danter Company housing study being undertaken for Tompkins County and the Downtown Ithaca Alliance confirms the very special position Ithaca holds in the Southern Tier economy. Among the highlights of this data:

- Ithaca/Tompkins County has far more jobs than population. Our ratio of “employment as a percent of population” was 76.3% in 2015, far above the national average of 59.5%. The Danter Company calculated the 2015 population deficit for Ithaca/Tompkins County at 18,485. This means that up to this many people need to commute into Ithaca every day to cover the jobs that exist. This finding is consistent with transportation data that shows a strong in-migration of workers into Ithaca.
- By 2025, the ratio of employment as a percent of population is expected to increase to 82.2%..
- These workers will need to come from throughout the region. According to a model prepared by the Danter Company, the population deficit is expected to increase to 26,268 by 2025.
- As of 2105, Danter estimated that Ithaca/Tompkins County has a deficit of 1,416 housing units, meaning we have 1,416 fewer housing units than national data suggests we should have given our population, employment, and households.
- The housing deficit does not take into account any new growth (Ithaca/Tompkins County is growing) or any in-migration of people from other parts of New York/Pennsylvania moving to Ithaca to live). Danter expects this deficit to grow.
- In properties with 24 or more units (typical apartment buildings or complexes), the Countywide vacancy rate is 1.8%. While the Downtown numbers have yet to be released, Danter expects Downtown to be a strong market with very low vacancies.

- As of today there is an average of 165 single family housing units being built in the County annually. This compares with 217 starts per year in comparable markets nationwide. We are not building housing fast enough, either with single family or multi-family/apartments, to keep up with our demand
- This new 2016 Danter data suggests that Ithaca/Tompkins County is indeed a growth node in upstate New York that requires help to provide the housing needed to sustain and fuel its growth. Downtown Ithaca will be a key part of an emerging Countywide strategy to provide more housing units to help satisfy the range of people looking to live in Ithaca—including young professionals, families, and retirees.

### Building for the Future: Possible DRI projects

We have identified a series of projects and actions that will take us to the next level of success. These projects collectively will result in \$214,000,000 of investment. Using the \$10 million DRI funding as a base, they translate into a 21/1 leveraging ratio for the State and for the Southern Tier. These projects will result in 799,028 SF of new space and create or retain 624 jobs in Ithaca's urban core.

In Part 8 of this application we detail this list of projects, providing information on their scope and impact. Here we summarize a list of possible projects, and their potential contribution to the economic health of the region.

Our proposed project fall into two categories: (1) catalytic infrastructure projects that will stimulate further private investment and (2) private sector projects that help us achieve our goal of building a millennial city of tomorrow.

#### **1. The Catalytic Proposed Infrastructure Projects**

**Historic State Theatre:** Scheduled for the wrecking ball in 1998, the State Theatre was saved and reopened by the non-profit Historic Ithaca, Inc. When Historic Ithaca faltered under the strain of maintaining the theatre, the community established a not-for-profit organization to own and manage the facility - State Theatre, Inc (STI). STI has managed the theatre since 2009, restoring its fiscal health and generating some 80 events dates a year and driving 60,000 patrons downtown each year. The Theatre needs to be renovated in order to remain competitive. STI is proposing two projects to expand their lobby by integrating an adjacent building and by adding air conditioning to create year round space. These projects will total approximately \$1 million and help to boost economic activities in the blocks surrounding the theatre.

**Cayuga Street Improvements:** With the completion of the Ithaca Commons project, the next major downtown infrastructure project will be the \$0.25 million Cayuga Street corridor project. This two block corridor connects the Commons pedestrian mall with DeWitt Mall and Moosewood Restaurant to the north as well the public library, Coltivare, and the Hotel Ithaca

project to the south. These blocks currently lack adequate lighting and streetscape amenities necessary to serve tourists and residents.

***Tompkins Financial Old Headquarters building to potentially become the Heritage Education & Tourism Center:*** By building a new headquarters, Tompkins Financial will vacate its historic headquarters building on the Commons. This building has been identified by the History Center, a museum and community programming center, as its top choice for a new location. Located on the eastern edge of Downtown Ithaca, relocating to the Ithaca Commons will make the History Center a more impactful tourist attraction. The project will involve co-locating with other area nonprofits and will require subsidy assistance to proceed. It will re-use a central downtown property and create a 15,000 SF visitor attraction that encourages tourists to extend their stays in downtown, generating additional economic activity.

***Downtown Conference Center:*** There is no facility in downtown able to accommodate conferences. With its four major hotels, 594 downtown lodging rooms, and newly constructed Commons, Downtown Ithaca is poised to become a center for meeting and conference activity. Utilizing a grant from the Tompkins County Room Tax Program, the Downtown Ithaca Alliance is working with the CVB, City, County, TCAD, Cornell, and other stakeholders on a feasibility study to determine the scope and breadth of such a project. Several downtown locations have been identified. Such a project is intended to drive mid-week business to the major hotels, helping to keep them stable, and providing additional foot traffic for downtown retail and restaurant businesses.

***Green Street Parking Garage:*** The Green Street Parking Garage is a cornerstone piece of downtown infrastructure. Built 40 years ago, the garage has reached the end of its life and the City is studying options for the facility: a rehabilitation and restore strategy and a rebuild strategy. The garage is critical to the development of about 336,000 SF of new space and serves as the primary parking for such projects as the Marriott Hotel, Center Ithaca, the Rothschild Building, and over 50% of Downtown Ithaca's retail.

***Winter Village Trail:*** Where else but in Ithaca will you be able to step onto a trail in the heart of Downtown and walk into a gorge or walk to your neighborhood's Wegmans. The Winter Village Trail follows the meandering Six Mile Creek. Concept plans are being formulated for trail extension east in the gorge and southwest toward Route 13 and Wegman's. The trail will serve both visitors and daily commuters.

***Downtown Business Loan Fund:*** There is a need for a downtown loan fund targeted to support new tenant businesses who require tenant improvements. These would be retail, street level businesses as well as knowledge and creative industry businesses.

## **2. The Private Sector Projects**

**Harold's Square Development:** This is a major \$40 million mixed-use project located on the Commons pedestrian mall that will link the Green Street transit corridor to the Commons. The project has obtained all regulatory entitlements and has been granted CIITAP incentives by the community. It remains unbuilt due to a funding gap and its need to pre-lease a large portion of the office space. The developers have brought on board additional equity owners and are re-tooling the project to consist of more housing and less office space. The new project will create 151,410 SF of new space, including 11,000 SF of retail, 14,000 SF of office, and 86 new housing units. With financial support from the DRI, this project is poised to proceed.

**Trebloc Project:** This block was up-zoned in 2014 to encourage the development of this underutilized one-acre parcel adjacent to the Commons. A 1960's one story suburban style office building currently sits on the parcel. A regional development team is proposing to develop the property, creating some 100 units of housing and 20,000 square feet of ground floor retail. This project is estimated to cost \$30 million, create 130,000SF of new space, and generate up to 100 jobs. Like all Downtown Ithaca projects, it will require subsidy to proceed.

**Tompkins Financial New Headquarters Building:** Downtown Ithaca's largest private employer is Tompkins Financial, the parent organization for the Tompkins Trust Company. A major lender in the Southern Tier, Tompkins Financial is looking to consolidate their operations into one efficient building, providing 110,000 SF of new office space for them to grow and expand. They have examined suburban options that would put their operation on a single floor, but have opted to build a headquarters building in Downtown Ithaca on Seneca Street between the historic DeWitt Mall and the Seneca Place (Hilton Garden) project. This project will retain 200 jobs in downtown and bring another 77 jobs into the core.

**DeWitt House:** Tompkins County has selected Travis Hyde Properties of Ithaca as their preferred developer for the former County library. Located at the corner of Court and Cayuga Street across from DeWitt Park, this parcel is an excellent site for housing. Travis Hyde is developing a proposal for a 72,500 SF mixed-use project that will result in 60 units of new housing, professional offices, and an expanded space for the Lifelong retirement community.

**Hilton Canopy Hotel:** The Canopy by Hilton project will be located on the same block as Restaurant Row, the Community School for Music and Arts, the Carey Building, and Contemporary Trends furniture store. Canopy by Hilton is a new upscale boutique brand and the project will be one of 11 Canopy projects built worldwide. All other initial properties will be built in tier one cities. Canopy will create 74,475 SF of new space and offer 123 rooms. The total project cost is estimated at \$19 million and has received its permits and CIITAP tax incentive assistance.

**201-207 North Aurora Project:** Local developers Todd Fox and Bryan Warren have proposed a new development at the corner of Aurora and Seneca Streets. The developers have submitted plans to the Ithaca Planning Board for initial review but will require additional subsidy and

support. This project will consist of about 35 units of new housing and 5,000 SF of retail/commercial space. The project is likely to cost around \$10 million.

**202 The Commons:** 202 The Commons property is a historic seven story corner building that was most recently the branch location for a regional bank. The owners of the property, Ithaca Renting, are committed to repurposing the old building by creating 20 units of upper floor housing and 5,000 SF retail/commercial space. The estimated cost of this project is \$2 million. While this project will utilize historic tax credits, it will require additional subsidy to proceed.

**Seneca Street Bank Drive Thru Project:** Regional developer Ithaca Renting has identified a possible project on Seneca Street, the current location of a former bank drive-through. This vacant parcel is proposed for redevelopment into a +/-8 floor mixed-use building with an estimated 100 units of housing and 10,000 SF of retail/commercial space. The building would create 80,000 SF of new space at a key in-fill location in Downtown adjacent to a City parking garage.

**Elmira Savings Bank Relocation:** Elmira Savings Banks has purchased property on the West State Street corridor to create their new downtown Ithaca location. The project will consist of a 4,420 SF renovation and addition that will house the bank on the ground floor and rental office space on the second floor. Estimated total cost is \$2.7 million.

**Ithaca Journal Building Expansion:** Urban COre LLC, owner and developer of both the Journal Building and Press Bay Alley, are considering a project that would create an atrium/ pedestrian walkway connecting the West State Street/Commons area with the newly launched Press Bay Alley retail center. This atrium would provide a badly need cross block connection as well as new micro retail units for start up entrepreneurs.

The cumulative impact of these projects would be tremendous for Downtown Ithaca and the Southern Tier region. Each project contributes to a stronger, more dynamic Downtown Ithaca, providing jobs, and/or traffic generating capacity. The complete package will create 799,028 SF of new space, result in new investment of \$214,000,000, and generate 624 permanent jobs.

## Part 4: Job Growth

*Describe how recent or impending job growth within, or in close proximity to, the downtown will attract professionals to an active life in the downtown, support redevelopment, and make growth sustainable in the long-term.*

Downtown Ithaca and its nearby surroundings possess the job base to support continued redevelopment thanks to the presence of Cornell University and Ithaca College, along with future and existing downtown jobs. The planned Chain Works project, located within walking

distance of Downtown, will create manufacturing and office jobs and and attract new residents. To have young professionals and technology and creative class workers be a primary cog of our local economies, we need to provide them with an environment they find enticing, rewarding, and stimulating.

Who populates and uses downtown? Where have the jobs come from and where will they emerge in the future?

In the past downtown Ithaca has served as a major employment center for the region. There are 3,000 workers within three block of the Commons — retail workers, professional and financial services employees, local government workers, and a growing cluster technology/creative workers. Nearly 10,000 people work at businesses within a one mile radius of the central pedestrian mall. These figures include a segment of the workforces at Cornell University and Ithaca College.

At 9,800 workers, Cornell is the Southern Tier's largest employer. The wage scale for employees is among the best in the State. While higher education employment has ebbed slightly in recessionary periods, it remains a perennial strong and constant employer, making it possible for Downtown Ithaca to grow and develop.

The current crop of downtown projects will also be adding to the downtown job base. It is estimated that over 260 workers will be added to Downtown Ithaca employment rolls as a result of projects currently under construction. These include:

- The Downtown Marriott on the Commons (75 jobs)
- REV expansion (75 startup members and counting)
- Finger Lakes School of Massage (40 staff members, plus 150 students annually)
- Tompkins Financial's new seven-story downtown headquarters will create 77 new jobs.

Looking into the future, Cornell is expected to add undergraduate and graduate students to its student body. It will also experience tremendous turnover in upcoming years as baby boomers age out of the workforce. Cornell will be faced with recruiting premier talent to upstate New York and will count on Downtown Ithaca to be a strong and positive magnet for recruitment of faculty and staff.

Access between Cornell and downtown is an important element of the Downtown Ithaca 2020 Strategic Plan. The plan calls for the development of strong transit links and corridors connecting Downtown Ithaca to Cornell, Ithaca College, and the emerging waterfront. Ithaca College employs 1,822 people (as of fall 2013) and has the same opportunity to help seed the economy of Downtown Ithaca. At Ithaca College, the number of students will remain around the current 6,769 mark (as of the 2015/16 year).

The major redevelopment of the Chain Works site, a half mile from the Ithaca Commons, will be a huge boon to downtown Ithaca. While technically outside of downtown's target area, this

project will still provide downtown with a growing population base of knowledge and creative class workers. The Chain Works project involves the rehabilitation of over 800,000 SF of space at the previous Emerson plant that would be redeveloped into light manufacturing and technology space, housing, office and retail. Faced with contamination of the soils underneath the site after years of neglect and inadequate cleanup, this site presents the opportunity for a major investment if these environmental factors and their associated costs are overcome.

Because Ithaca is such a walkable city and residential neighborhoods are adjacent to the boundaries of downtown, there is a large walking population that lives within one mile or 10 blocks of the Commons. According to 2010 Nielsen data, 22,568 people live within one mile of downtown Ithaca. Together with Cornell, Ithaca College, and downtown employees, these workers and residents form the core base of daily users.

## **Part 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.*

Downtown Ithaca has demonstrated an ability to attract people to live, work, and play. Ithaca has adopted a strategy that presumes that a successful downtown must provide many different characteristics simultaneously.

Why does Ithaca possess the requisite properties and characteristics needed to grow and develop its downtown into the city of the future? What additional steps need to be taken to achieve this goal? In no particular order, we have listed twelve attributes that characterize a great city and discuss how Downtown Ithaca addresses these attributes and what issues remains that the DRI grant can assist us in overcoming.

**Pedestrian scale:** Downtowns that work have a pedestrian scale. In recent decades, many regional cities have shrunk as their metropolitan populations have declined, resulting in over-sized downtowns anachronistically scaled to the automobile. Research has shown that the most successful downtowns are scaled to pedestrians: streets and public spaces are designed to enhance walkability, and a premium placed on the ground floor retail experience.

Downtown Ithaca is blessed with a pedestrian scaled core because Ithaca's hilly geography has kept Downtown tight and compact. Standing on the central pedestrian mall, one can walk three blocks in any direction and get to the edges of Downtown.

This walkable scale has many merits but comes at a financial cost. New development within such tight boundaries is expensive and requires creativity and flexibility on the part of the community. Despite being known as city of seemingly endless public debate, we have successfully put together programs that have helped to make development in tight urban quarters feasible. The DRI grant provides us with important infrastructure and gap filling assistance to help this development process continue.

**Cleanliness:** A prerequisite for any downtown in today's world is that it must pass the public's test for cleanliness and safety. A public accustomed to privately managed interior shopping malls expects shopping and dining experiences to meet a certain level of cleanliness, order, and curb appeal.

To maintain one of the State's most dynamic and successful BIDs, the Downtown Ithaca Alliance strives to meet this test for public acceptance by working collaboratively with the City to keep Downtown's public spaces, streets, and sidewalks clean and neat. The BID employs ambassadors who remove litter and debris throughout the day, tend and water plantings, remove graffiti, and work to create a pleasant pedestrian environment capable of supporting future growth.

One of our biggest challenge comes in the form of aging infrastructure. While we successfully rebuilt our pedestrian mall (with the aid of State CFA funding), there are remaining blocks that have inadequate lighting and that require some additional level of improvement to bring them to acceptable levels of public approval. The DRI program can assist us in meeting these important infrastructure needs.

**Public Art:** In conjunction with cleanliness, a successful downtown needs to look and feel inviting and attractive. Flowers and landscaping help accomplish this, as does public art. Unlike flowers and plantings, art can remain year round and provides beauty and discovery in all seasons.

Our goal is for visitors and patrons to experience public art on each and every visit. Whether you find art in one of our garages, on the sidewalks, or in alleyways, people who patronize Downtown Ithaca will discover and experience art at nearly every turn. This program was initiated by the BID and is now run by both the BID and the City's Public Arts Commission.

**Mixed-Use Projects:** Dynamic downtowns were originally built with a mix of uses blended together within buildings. People lived, worked, shopped, and entertained themselves in the same downtown neighborhood. This synergy made for workable, successful downtowns. Mixed-use is crucial to downtown revitalization and a fundamental part of Downtown Ithaca's 2020 Strategic Plan. Nearly all newer projects and initiatives have honored this need for mixed-use development.

However, mixed-use development requires a commitment to ideals, sometimes in the face of economic hardships. The City of Ithaca has demonstrated its commitment to this ideal through an ordinance that requires ground level businesses in the Commons area to be active use enterprises that generate and/or rely on foot traffic. Such an ordinance helps maintain Downtown's mixed-use appeal and ensure that ground floor tenancy remain retail and active.

Site Plan Review considers the mixed-use nature of projects, and seeks urban core projects that reflect this diversity of use.

Downtown Ithaca also has older legacy projects that were not mixed-use and diminish, rather than enhance, the visitor experience. These projects are remnants of an earlier time when single-use projects were preferred. We have two downtown garages that are single purpose built, Seneca and Green. As these facilities are renovated and/or rebuilt, they provide an opportunity for activating their ground floors. When we built the new Cayuga Parking Garage in 2005, we earmarked the ground floor for retail space. Today that space is occupied by Merrill Lynch and Tompkins Cortland Community College's culinary arts school Coltivare.

**Access to food/groceries:** Downtowns are neighborhoods that require the same amenities and services that you would find in any other established, mature neighborhood. As they grow as centers for residential living, it is important to make sure populations have access to key services such as pharmacies, restaurants, and grocery stores.

Downtown Ithaca's 1,000 city center residents have several food and service options. The City and BID worked to attract a branch of Ithaca's very successful and popular food co-op GreenStar Natural Foods to downtown and this 5,000 SF store now serves as a mini-grocery store for the district. Similarly, the City and BID worked to attract a pharmacy to Downtown to serve the needs of both residents and workers. Green Street Pharmacy is our County's only independent operator, and has proven to be an important and valued member of the downtown community.

Access to food also means partnering to bring regional and local produce to the community. Downtown Ithaca hosts a Tuesday farmers market in DeWitt Park from May to October. We have CSA pick-ups spots and a meat locker program for residents to buy locally raised meat in bulk and have a storage place if the user cannot afford a freezer.

Using the DRI grant, we hope to expand this access to food and basic services.

**Parks and green/public space:** Green and public spaces enhance and improve the appeal of dense urban spaces. In Ithaca we have gone "all in" on building public spaces to enhance and contribute to the vibrancy of our downtown. The Commons pedestrian mall is the best example. A \$15 million project that ended in August 2015 rebuilt the Commons, creating America's newest and most state-of-the-art pedestrian mall. This three block urban oasis is a car free zone

in the heart of downtown designed to give the pedestrian priority and has proven to be a place where independent retail can thrive.

But we do more than just rely on the pedestrian mall. We also have an urban park - DeWitt Park. We have been creating a hard scape urban creek walk along Six Mile Creek. This project will eventually link downtown with the eastern neighborhoods and provide an amazing visitor experience allowing people to walk from downtown into local gorges. We also have invested in pop up mini-parks, where we use a few tables, chairs, planters, and umbrellas to create a micro urban oasis for passersby.

The DRI grant will be helpful to assist with the Winter Village/ Six-Mile Creek trail design and construction.

**Retail:** The health and vitality of a downtown is largely determined by its street level retail presence. Retail engages the public at the ground floor and provides an essential dynamism that successful downtowns need.

We are fortunate to retain a strong retail core with over seventy retail businesses ranging from gifts, to kitchenware, to jewelry, apparel, music, and art. The BID, working with the City, works to maintain and grow this inventory of businesses. Each year efforts are undertaken to add to the mix of retail, seeking out niches and types that will best fit the marketplace.

A DRI grant would enable us to better recruit and assist key retailers. We are interested in creating a Downtown Ithaca loan fund that would be used to prepare storefronts for new tenants. This incentive fund could encourage key retail merchants to choose Ithaca as a place for their desired business.

**Restaurants:** Restaurants are often powerful traffic generators for downtowns. In Downtown Ithaca we host some 60 food and beverage operators who collectively attract some 900,000 patrons each year. Outdoor patio dining has become a key measure of the health and vitality of a downtown and outdoor dining venues have significantly increased over the past decade.

Building new restaurants is an expensive undertaking. DRI funds would assist in this effort by supporting Downtown Ithaca loan and incentives fund which can be used to support such projects.

**Services:** To create a successful downtown, there must also be an emphasis on the miscellaneous services that urban residents, employees, and visitors require. These include: healthcare and wellness services, social service facilities, and other services that improve and enhance an urban quality of life.

In Downtown Ithaca we have worked to assemble a collection of these services. Among them are: medical facilities, a massage school, financial services firms, coffee shops, and an urban high school. To meet our goal of adding 1,500 downtown housing units and build downtown as

a regional employment hub, we need to ensure that residents and workers have access to a broad range of services.

The DRI grant can help us advance this collection of services, particularly in the area of medical and wellness, as we work with our local hospital (CMC) on a possible downtown presence.

**Transit and TDM:** Gridlocked streets and auto-centric locales are not conducive to successful cities. How we integrate transit and work to move people from automobiles to alternative transportation will be crucial to successful 21<sup>st</sup> century cities.

In Ithaca, we have been working on these concerns for some time. Our TCAT bus system was rated the number one small city system in North America. We have instituted a shuttle connecting Downtown with Cornell, making it easier to ride the bus than to drive. We have created our own car share program, Ithaca Carshare, with cars placed throughout downtown. We are creating an emergency ride home program to enable more people to use public transit. We are working on remote parking opportunities in order to move more vehicles out of our downtown garages. The BID, in conjunction with the City and other area providers, has launched a downtown transportation demand management program (TDM) to encourage more people to opt for alternative transportation.

CleanTechnica, a resource for clean energy and transport, estimates that 72 percent of our community's workforce gets to and from work by some means other than a personal car – second only to New York City in a study of over 2,000 urban areas nationwide. What is especially remarkable is that this stellar rating is achieved with a relatively low percentage of commuters regularly opting for public transportation – 10 percent, as compared to New York City's 54 percent. This suggests that downtown Ithaca is a unique haven for bikers and other "active commuters" who delight in the many economic, environmental, social, and physiological benefits to forgoing cars and buses.

**Arts and entertainment:** Downtowns are also places of recreation. People from the metropolitan area as well as the entire region should be using downtown as a place to visit for entertainment and the arts.

Downtown Ithaca features the renovated historic State Theatre (a 1,600 seat live performance venue), the Kitchen Theater (an intimate 99-seat live performance theater), and Cinemapolis (a 5 screen movie house). We host music clubs, drinking establishments, a kava bar, and businesses devoted to arts instruction (such as Wine and Design).

In Downtown Ithaca, we undertake a year round program of special events and activities designed to engage the community and our region. Downtown Ithaca Alliance events attracted 130,000 people to downtown in 2015, adding to the foot traffic needed to make a healthy and dynamic downtown.

A DRI grant would enable us to enhance and add to our arts and entertainment offerings. Two projects that are ready to proceed are additions to the State Theatre - to create an enlarged lobby that will accommodate growing audiences - and the creation of a new Downtown Heritage Center. The Heritage Center proposal seeks to relocate and expand our History Center museum and co-locate it with other community organizations and attractions, such as our downtown visitor center.

**Housing:** The real test of a downtown is will people be willing to live there. Downtown Ithaca has passed that test. Currently, there are 669 housing units in the BID with an estimated 1,000 residents. Downtown Ithaca is one of the region's fastest growing areas due to this increase in housing stock.

The Ithaca housing scene is complex and difficult. Housing demand is fueled by Cornell and Ithaca College, resulting in extremely tight availability of units. A 2011 Danter Study of Multifamily Housing commissioned by the Downtown Ithaca Alliance showed a 0.5% vacancy rate in downtown and across the entire Ithaca market. A similar follow-up study is underway at this time and is expected to yield another tight housing market.

Housing demand is not an issue in Ithaca. Rather the concern and the challenge is building supply. Downtown has been identified as one of the places where a large number of units can be built. Zoning has been changed to permit taller buildings and more density to help accommodate this demand.

We also continue to wrestle with affordability. In recent years affordable units have been created using the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program (i.e. Breckenridge Place; 50 units). Scattered units have also been added using the NY Main Street program (104 The Commons, 204 North Cayuga) and the Restore NY Program (the Mia building). But the need for low and moderate income housing remains chronic and we continue to pursue sustainable policies and programs that will help our community better address all levels of housing.

## **Part 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.*

Building a city for the 21<sup>st</sup> century demands that municipal policies align with goals and objectives for growth, development, and livability. In Ithaca we have strived to enact policies that enable us to better achieve our goals. Such policy decisions are sometimes difficult and hotly debated. But ultimately offer solid proof of this community's resolve and determination to build and sustain a strong and vibrant downtown. Our policy successes include: zoning revisions, a downtown tax incentive program, design standards, ground floor active use, a bike boulevard

program, transportation demand management, panhandling, and a downtown community outreach worker initiative.

**Zoning:** For many years, Ithaca's zoning code gave special preference to downtown. The BID zones eliminated any parking requirements and allowed for maximum lot cover development, with only a small rear setback for building servicing. This action eliminates parking as a regulatory hurdle for development and is a major benefit for developers.

In 2014, the City enacted a revision to downtown zoning that up-zoned a significant portion of the downtown core and added new parcels to the BID zone. Heights up to 140 feet are now possible. Added BID property includes the West State Street/MLK corridor that connects the Commons with Route 13 and the waterfront.

While form based code is being used elsewhere in the City, downtown Ithaca zoning has worked remarkably well without it in recent years. Though not a top priority, form-based code will eventually be introduced to Downtown Ithaca.

**CIITAP Tax Incentive Program:** Recognizing that downtown /urban core projects routinely have funding gaps and require external resources to proceed, the City and County worked together to create a special tax incentive program for urban core projects. Eight major projects have applied for this program in its current iteration (established 2012). All of these projects would have been stopped from proceeding without the funding assistance from this innovative program. CIITAP (Community Investment Incentive Tax Abatement Program) provides graduated property tax abatement over a 7 or 10 year period and offers sales tax exemption on construction materials and relief from the local portion of the mortgage recording tax. These incentives have helped to secure nearly 500,000 SF of new projects in the urban core. While this program has undergone modifications over the years and continues to be reviewed regularly, it has proven to be a fundamental tool for Ithaca in its efforts to revitalize Downtown.

**Design Standards:** Ithaca's Planning Board also serves as the Design Review board for the City and evaluates projects for their architectural character and fit with their neighborhood. Beginning in 2016, the City of Ithaca entered into a contract with Winter & Associates (Boulder, CO) to undertake the preparation of design standards for Downtown Ithaca. These standards will help guide project and rehab design, resulting in an even more pedestrian friendly downtown, with projects that fit into the context of the neighboring blocks. These design standards will be ready for public review and Ithaca Common Council approval late this year.

**Active Use:** The importance of street level retail and restaurants is paramount in a strong downtown. When ground floor space is taken out of active use, it creates dead spots in the fabric of the street. The pedestrian experience is diminished and nearby commercial sales are negatively affected. Recognizing this impact on downtown, Common Council voted in early 2016 to create a zone in downtown on the Commons to ensure that properties maintain active

street level uses. This ordinance regulates ground floor uses, helping to achieve a stronger retail/commercial core.

**Bike Boulevard Program:** A key part of complete streets is the inclusion of space for bicycles. The City of Ithaca has approved a Bike Boulevard plan that connects all parts of the City, including Downtown, into a comprehensive network of bicycle corridors.

**Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** TDM has become an important part of the Downtown Ithaca scene for two reasons. First, TDM helps the community to better meet its carbon reduction and energy efficiency goals. Second, TDM is a critical tool to help manage and control parking utilization. TDM helps us explore alternative travel opportunities to help reduce demand on parking.

A TDM pilot program is ongoing with the help of a NYSERDA grant. The Downtown Ithaca Alliance partners with the Cornell Cooperative Extension Way to Go Program and Ithaca Carshare to implement this initiative. TDM has also become part of the City's Site Plan Review process.

**Panhandling:** Panhandling is a national problem that is persistent in upstate New York cities. In Ithaca, we have addressed this issue in two ways. First, the City passed an aggressive panhandling ordinance prohibiting people from panhandling in manners that would be deemed aggressive and an infringement on an individual's personal space.

Second, the BID is currently working with the community on a special program that would serve as an alternative to panhandling and enable the public to provide fiscal support to a fund used to provide food and special needs for homeless and other people who are either forced or have chosen to take to the street. This program will pilot a "pay-it-forward" concept that will enable some downtown restaurants and establishments (such as our pharmacy) to maintain open funds to feed and service the needs of inquiring homeless people at all times.

**Downtown Outreach Worker:** The BID, City, and County have joined together to create a special program that funds a downtown outreach worker. This employee is charged with interacting with people in the downtown target area who have special needs or who may require extra assistance and help. This includes the homeless, people with mental problems, truant youth, and people with substance abuse problems. This program seeks to intervene at the street level, in lieu of police intervention, to connect people with appropriate services and resources and to de-escalate possible problems and eliminate the need to create a police response and subsequent criminal record. This pilot program has been operating for about a year and has proven to be an effective tool for compassionately managing a difficult community concern.

## Part 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.*

Ithaca has a proud tradition of spawning many organizations addressing the issues of our community. It likewise has an equally proud and strong tradition of these entities working together toward common goals. This ability to work together has proven to be one of the keys of economic development success here in Ithaca and Tompkins County. We will continue that tradition with this grant.

Community support for Downtown revitalization has been and is expected to remain strong. Policy changes, zoning amendments, and new projects all require political and public support. Without strong community support, downtowns cannot hope to rebuild and participate in regional growth and development.

In Ithaca, this support begins with the Downtown Ithaca Alliance (DIA), the BID for Downtown Ithaca. The DIA has been a champion of downtown revitalization since its inception in 1997. Its board is structured to include major downtown and community stakeholders, including the City Mayor, a Common Council representative, a City staffer, a County Legislator, and representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Cornell, Ithaca College, and TC3. The DIA pursues a comprehensive program of downtown management and revitalization, focusing on business retention and development, downtown operations and environment, transportation and parking, marketing, and special events. It operates with an annual budget of around \$900,000 and employs 6+ professionals to implement its 100 item annual work plan. The DIA also took the lead on developing the ten-year Downtown Ithaca 2020 Strategic Plan to guide and direct downtown revitalization. The plan is endorsed by the City Common Council.

The City of Ithaca has likewise championed the importance and significance of Downtown in its planning, budgeting, and operations. A strong urban core is a critical and fundamental part of the City's new comprehensive plan. The City works daily on downtown growth and management issues, ranging from permitting projects, recruiting businesses, public art, parking management, and overseeing the maintenance of the Commons pedestrian mall. The City has been at the forefront of efforts to create policies that help to level the playing field for Downtown with suburban, arterial, and greenfield development. In 2015, the City completed a major capital project to rebuild the aging Ithaca Commons pedestrian mall. This \$15 million investment has helped spur further private sector growth and development. Similarly, the City invested in the reconstruction of West State/MLK State, creating a re-bricked street with new sidewalks. This investment stimulated the growth of this end of Downtown. The City has invested in the development of the Six Mile Creek walkway, resulting in new buildings being built along this

corridor. The City also invested in the development of the 686-car Cayuga parking garage with ground floor retail that has served as a key catalyst for additional downtown development.

Tompkins County has been a strong partner in downtown revitalization. This support includes overseeing and managing the CIITAP tax incentive program through its Industrial Development Agency (IDA) and providing substantial assistance to downtown through its Room Tax grant programs (ambassador and special event services receive funding from this source). It includes a County planning strategy that focuses on nodal development and recognizes the importance and significance of Downtown Ithaca. Tompkins County has also made significant capital investments in Downtown, opting to use a former 70,00 SF vacant department store for its public library, and making the former library building available for redevelopment.

TCAD, the County's nonprofit economic development agency, manages the CIITAP program for the county and has been a key partner in helping to fund and advance major downtown projects.

The Chamber of Commerce and its Convention and Visitor's Bureau, has opened a downtown visitor center, which is a partnership of the CVB, the DIA, and our Community Arts Partnership.

Our institutions of higher education have all stepped forward to make contributions to the health and vitality of Downtown. Cornell University moved 300 jobs downtown and commissioned the development of Seneca Place, a nine story 185,000 SF mixed-use building that includes office space, a Hilton Garden Inn, and ground floor retail. Cornell took a leadership role with Ithaca College and Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) to create REV, a downtown based entrepreneurship incubator that has already doubled its size and serves nearly 50 new startup businesses. TC3 has purchased a major downtown building for its Ithaca extension center. TC3 also created the innovative Coltivare, its Culinary Arts program and home for a full teaching restaurant, and hospitality and wine marketing programs. Ithaca College has opened two programs in Downtown- a studio for film production and a student art gallery. These institutional contributions are important parts of Ithaca downtown revitalization efforts and these institutions are seen as ongoing partners.

In the realm of transportation, TCAT, the County, Cornell Cooperative Extension and its Way to Go program, and Ithaca Carshare are all partners in an effort to make the downtown more pedestrian friendly and guide people toward alternative transportation.

Another key partner group is property owners, developers, businesses and landlords because development can only occur when the private sector is willing and able to invest. The Ithaca development community has embraced downtown development and has been willing to work with the City, DIA, County, and others on policies and plans that affect development. Owners and developers regularly provide input when policies are being formulated that affect the downtown community.

The Downtown Ithaca Alliance participates in the New York State Urban Council and the International Downtown Association in leadership ways to help generate new and innovative approaches to revitalization.

For this DRI grant application, these stakeholders convened together to discuss proceeding with this grant and to reaffirm their stakeholder interests and commitments to downtown. The list of DRI committee invitees and participants included:

- Steve Headrick, Board President, Downtown Ithaca Alliance
- Gary Ferguson, Executive Director, Downtown Ithaca Alliance
- JoAnn Cornish, City of Ithaca Planning and Development Director
- Phyllisa DeSarno, City of Ithaca Economic Development Director
- Nels Bohn, Executive Director, City of Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency
- Ed Marx, Tompkins County Planning Commissioner
- Heather McDaniel, Tompkins County Area Development
- Jennifer Tavares, President, Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce/CVB
- Tom Schryver, Cornell University, REV
- Frost Travis, local downtown developer/landlord
- John Guttridge, local downtown developer/landlord; Board of State Theatre

Upon selection, this committee would be further expanded to include a broader range of stakeholders and used as the client committee for this grant.

Support letters from key community stakeholders can be found starting on page 62 of the DRI application.

## **Part 8: Other Considerations**

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

To view a short video featuring Ithaca Mayor Svante Myrick summarizing Ithaca's DRI application, please click the following link: [https://youtu.be/8OAHi3KC\\_yM](https://youtu.be/8OAHi3KC_yM)

We have identified five key questions:

- (a) Does Downtown Ithaca have the capacity and the projects to spend \$10 million?
- (b) Why invest in Downtown Ithaca? Isn't it already doing well on its own?
- (c) What regional benefits accrue from selecting Ithaca?

(d) What development has preceded DRI and how does this development set the table for a successful DRI program?

(e) What projects would likely be supported/funded?

**(a) Does Downtown Ithaca have the capacity and the projects to spend \$10 million?**

Downtown Ithaca has the capacity and the track record to wisely and appropriately utilize DRI funds. Ithaca's record of accomplishment over the period 2004 – 2016 demonstrates an ability to identify, nurture, and bring projects to fruition, with the help and aid of a number of different sources of funding and support.

The City and the DIA/BID have the staff resources to work on complex and challenging projects, to assist developers, to recruit businesses, to strategize and plan, and to engage and involve the community. The team of people who work on downtown development is experienced working together and working with a wide array of funding and planning resources. We routinely engage in planning. As a case in point, at this very moment there are two studies in process—a downtown conference center feasibility study and a downtown housing market demand study.

We would be well positioned to utilize the front end planning money that accompanies the DRI award and have identified a list of potential projects that total over \$214 million. This represents a 21/1 leverage ratio for State DRI funds. We anticipate primarily private sector investment with selected, targeted public infrastructure improvement that will help strengthen or catalyze further private sector growth.

We have identified the following catalytic infrastructure projects for DRI assistance:

- Improvements to the key Cayuga Street corridor
- Funds to assist in the rebuilding of the essential Green Street parking garage
- Creation of a Winter Village (Six-Mile Creek) trail
- Funds to support the proposed downtown conferencing/meeting center
- A new Downtown Heritage Center project
- An expansion of the historic State Theatre
- The creation of a downtown loan and incentive fund for new businesses

We have likewise initially identified private sector projects that are preparing to start or that may require some element of gap funding to assist them in moving forward:

- Harold's Square mixed-use project
- City Center on the Commons - a new Trebloc site mixed-use project
- A new Aurora/Seneca corner (201-207 N. Aurora) mixed-use project
- A new Seneca Street @ the Commons (bank drive thru site) mixed-use project
- 202 The Commons rehabilitation
- Canopy by Hilton Hotel project

- Tompkins Financial headquarters building
- Elmira Savings Bank relocation
- The Journal Building expansion
- The DeWitt House mixed-use project

A summary of the potential projects is attached. Each project is summarized on a single sheet, with relevant details along with relevant financial and economic impact data. While we recognize that the DRI template instruction do not call for identifying potential projects, we want to make clear that Ithaca would use the DRI funding to help leverage a large and varied array of downtown projects. These, in conjunction with projects already underway, can result in fundamental and transformational changes for Downtown Ithaca, creating a small city downtown that can be a magnet and beacon for Upstate and the Southern Tier.

**(b) Why invest in Downtown Ithaca? Isn't it already doing well on its own?**

The call for submissions for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative references the interest of the State in identifying and investing in “bright spots”, places that have or can demonstrate a capacity to grow and be showcase 21<sup>st</sup> century downtowns. Ithaca is such a place.

We believe Downtown Ithaca has the capacity to become a world class small city. It already has a national reputation for its pedestrian mall, its record of growth and development, and its affiliation and linkages with Cornell, Ithaca College, and TC3. Ithaca is frequently cited in national polls and surveys as one of America’s best places to live, work, visit, and retire. In the last four years, we have received the following national accolades:

- Ithaca ranked the #2 Best Small College Town by USA Today, April 2016
- Ithaca ranked among the 20 Best College Towns in America, April 2015
- Ithaca named among best small cities for young single women, March 2015
- Robert H. Treman State Park named Best Swimming Spot in New York State, March 2015
- 10 Cheapest Urban Cities for Twentysomethings, February, 2015
- Ithaca named 9th Most Exciting College Towns by MSN Real Estate, May 2014
- The Finger Lakes is ranked the #8 must-visit spot on the “Wine Tours of the World” feature from ABC News, April 2014
- Tompkins County is named the #2 “Healthiest County in New York” by CountyHealthRankings.org, April 2014
- Ithaca named the #10 best New York art spots that aren't in NYC by the Huffington Post, March 2014
- Tompkins County named a top producer of notable baby-boomers by The New York Times, March 2014
- Ithaca named one of “America's Most Romantic Towns” by Travel + Leisure, January 2014
- Ithaca named #1 Best College Town by The 2013-2014 AIER College Destinations Index, November 2013

- Ithaca ranked #3 “10 Secretly Amazing Cities for Wine Lovers” - MSN Real Estate online, October, 2013
- Ithaca Ranked #1 “America's Best College Towns” by HomeInsurance.com, October 2013
- Ithaca Ranked #1 “Top 10 Cities You Want to Walk to Work” by MSN Real Estate online, September 2013
- Finger Lakes Region in “America's Top 10 Lakes to Visit this Fall” - The Daily Beast online - Conde Nast Traveler, September 2013
- Ithaca named in “Top 25 Youngest Best Places to Live - America's Best Small Towns” - CNN Money, August 2013
- Cornell University ranks #5 “Ten Coolest Schools” - Sierra Magazine, August 2013
- Ithaca College Among Nation's Best; Ranks Radio #1 & Theater #7 - Princeton Review, August 2013 (link to The Ithacan)
- Ithaca ranks #4 for “10 Most Livable Cities” - MSN Real Estate News, August 2013
- Ithaca Farmers Markets Ranks #4 in “8 Must-Visit Farmers Markets Around the U.S.” - Zagat.com, July 2013
- Ithaca ranked #8 - “10 Great Places to Live” by Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine, July 2013
- Ithaca ranked #3 of US Cities for Work-Life Balance by NerdWallet.com, July 2013
- Ithaca named #1 Smartest City in America by VentureBeat online, June 2013 (based on study by Luminosity)
- Ithaca named #1 best college town in America - “Top 10 Best College Towns in America” by Business Insider, January 2013

The package of projects we have identified can truly be transformational and these projects are real. They all have been proposed by developers and organizations ready and willing to champion and aggressively move forward, if gap funding and support from DRI can be obtained.

To summarize, these projects build upon the work of the past decade and truly position Downtown Ithaca for long term sustainability and success. As a package, these projects will:

- Create 799,028 SF of new downtown real estate;
- Create up to 594 new units of downtown housing (increasing our existing housing stock by 79%)
- Create 60,620 SF of new retail space (increasing existing supply by 19%)
- Create a major mid-week traffic generator (a downtown conference center) that will support and bolster our four major downtown hotels and provide a new and powerful stream of shoppers and diners for downtown businesses
- Create a new visitor destination in the heart of the city that will prolong tourist visits and provide a venue for our non-profits to co-habit
- Provide key corridor links to the Commons pedestrians along Cayuga Street from such existing attractions as Coltivare, Hotel Ithaca, the DeWitt Mall, and the world-renowned Moosewood Restaurant

- Rebuild the Green Street Garage, a key piece of downtown infrastructure and vital for many projects to proceed (such as the conference center, Harold's Square, and the Trebloc project). Out-of-county commuters rely on parking infrastructure.
- This package of projects would directly create an estimated 624 permanent jobs and leverage hundreds more
- Cornell and Ithaca College need a strong and vibrant downtown Ithaca to continue to attract world class faculty and researchers as well as the world's best and brightest students

The DRI grant program provides a vehicle for making this growth and development a reality. Even today, Downtown Ithaca projects all require subsidy and public sector support. The constricting nature of funding makes the DRI program extremely important and necessary for the growth to continue. A modest investment in Downtown Ithaca can readily be parlayed into extra-ordinary returns.

**(c) What regional benefits accrue from selecting Ithaca?**

We have identified five benefits that come with an Ithaca-centric project:

1. Helping Cornell University

- A project to fundamentally strengthen Downtown Ithaca will have positive benefits for Cornell University. As the Southern Tier's largest employer and as one of the nation's foremost research institutions, Cornell is constantly striving to recruit and retain the best and brightest talent - faculty, staff, researchers, and students. For Cornell that means 21,000 students in Ithaca and approximately 10,000 faculty, staff and researchers. A strong, vibrant, and nationally renowned Downtown Ithaca is important to this effort. Cornell's continued success in growth helps the entire Southern Tier. Campus employment reaches into all eight counties and program/project collaborations extend through the region.

2. Regional Jobs

- Downtown Ithaca has become a key jobs center for our region and is expected to continue to grow in the years ahead. Tompkins Financial has become a fast growing, regional institution. Their new 110,000 SF corporate headquarters in the heart of downtown attracts workers from a number of Southern Tier counties. Downtown has become a center for tech and creative, assisted in large measure by REV, our community incubator program. These jobs attract talent from throughout the region. Our four major hotels will attract workers from a number of counties surrounding Tompkins County. Many of our retail and service business owners work in Ithaca but reside in towns and cities in our region. A growing Downtown Ithaca will provide jobs for a number of Southern Tier workers. Our area MPO has identified that over 15,000 people commute into Tompkins County each day, many from the Southern Tier.

### 3. National reputation

- Ithaca is poised to make noise at the national level. In recent years Ithaca has been honored with a number of national awards and citations—as a best university city, as a best small city, as a best place to retire, and so on. As we build an exciting, new Downtown we hope and expect this national recognition to continue. We believe this recognition can benefit the entire Southern Tier and attract media, investment, and new people to our region.

### 4. Linking/co-marketing with Southern Tier

- In Ithaca, we welcome the opportunity to work with our colleagues across the Southern Tier on joint downtown oriented collaborations. These can include, but not be restricted to, co-marketing efforts. The proximity of Southern Tier cities makes them excellent candidates for prospective marketing of our downtowns to key demographics. The notion of sharing marketing opportunities remains appealing and attractive. Likewise, we look to see what other regional collaborations may be possible at the downtown/BID level.

### 5. Ability to spend the award money on a timely basis

- The State recognizes and awards the ability of jurisdictions and regions to expend dollars quickly and efficiently. The roster and package of projects assembled will readily utilize the DRI funds in a timely manner. Should any projects falter, we have a backlog of projects that can benefit from DRI funds.

### **(d) What development has preceded DRI and how does this development set the table for a successful DRI program?**

The DRI instructions reference the importance of a solid base of activity that can set the table for successful and meaningful DRI intervention. There is a desire to build upon prior projects and previous success to obtain the strongest possible DRI outcomes. In Ithaca, we have worked diligently to set this preliminary table for transformational revitalization.

As referenced throughout this document, we have spent the past decade growing our downtown, adding measurably to the total building stock of Downtown Ithaca. In 2004, we estimate that Downtown Ithaca had 690,000 total SF of office space, 250,000 total SF of retail space, 429 units of housing, and 181 hotel rooms. By 2016 we have substantially begun the process of remaking and re-positioning Downtown Ithaca for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We are not content to reclaim; we are growing the size of our urban core to accommodate an influx of new jobs and new residents.

At the end of this section we have included a brief summary of recent projects. We will capitalize on this project activity to ensure that DRI assistance will result in fundamental and transformational change of a Southern Tier downtown.

We have done more than undertake preparatory and preliminary projects. We have also put into place policies and programs that are prerequisites for successful downtown revitalization. They include:

- Our local new incentive program to encourage downtown development
- Ten year strategic plans for downtown revitalization
- New Downtown Ithaca zoning for higher density development
- Design standards for Downtown projects (under development)
- Ongoing studies to monitor and assess the marketplace for new development, such as our ongoing downtown housing study
- Creation and operation of a strong BID to serve as a focal center for downtown management, development, marketing, and promotional activity

Finally, Ithaca has a team of community leaders and stakeholders already in place working on and leading downtown revitalization activities and efforts. This is a team experienced in working together, in seeking creative solutions, and in prioritizing downtown as a place for regional growth and development. The team includes community members from:

- The City of Ithaca
- The Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency
- The Downtown Ithaca Alliance (operates the downtown BID)
- Tompkins County
- Tompkins County Area Development (TCAD)
- The Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce
- Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT)
- Cornell University
- Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3)
- Ithaca College
- Private developers and property owners
- Downtown business community representatives

We also engage and involve a number of stakeholder groups such as the Community Arts Partnership, the City Public Arts Commission, State Theatre, Inc., the Community School of Music and Arts (CSMA), the History Center, and Family & Children's Services, just to name some of the many partners and collaborators.

**(e) What projects would likely be supported/funded?**

While the DRI call for submissions does not ask for projects to be identified, we believe it is useful and important to highlight the scope of possible projects that can be addressed by a DRI award. These projects were assembled by the DRI client committee assembled for this initiative.

We have identified 17 projects to showcase. They are aggregated below and then summarized on one page summary sheets. They fall into two categories: catalytic infrastructure projects and private sector development. The table on the following page summarizes these 17 projects.

Note that catalytic public infrastructure projects are seen as tabling setting initiatives. They stimulate other public/private and private sector development. They represent prudent investments for the future and help generate substantial investment leverage.

Each possible DRI project is described in more detail on single page sheets. These are projects both ready to go and projects that are in concept stages. All have been proposed by developers and all can be implemented, with the help of DRI.

**DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE SUMMARY OF POSSIBLE PROJECTS**

<i>Name</i>	<i>\$ Invested</i>	<i>Hsg Units</i>	<i>Hotel Rms</i>	<i>Perm Jobs</i>	<i>Const Jobs</i>	<i>Retail SF</i>	<i>Office SF</i>	<i>Other SF</i>	<i>Tot SF</i>
201-207 N. Aurora	10,000,000	35		20	75	5000			40,000
Winter Village Trail					20				
Seneca St. Drive Thru Site	20,000,000	130		20	100	8000			80,000
202 The Commons	4,000,000	33		10	20	5000			33,584
Green Street Parking Garage					30				
City Centre on the Commons	50,000,000	250		30	100	10,000		9,000	200,000
Downtown Conference Center	15,000			50	20			15,000	15,000
Harold's Square	36,000,000	86		90	100	11,410	14,460		136,049
Downtown Loan Fund	250,000								
Tompkins County Heritage Center	5,000,000			5	25	2000	10000	10000	22,000
Tompkins Financial Headquarters	30,000,000			300	100	5000	105,000		110,000
Canopy by Hilton	24,000,000		123	47	100	2,000			74,475
State Theatre	1,000,000			2	10	1000			1,000
Journal Building	1,000,000			25	15	5,000	5,000		10,000
DeWitt House	30,000,000	60		5	100	4000		2000	72,500
Cayuga Street Infrastructure	250,000				10				
Elmira Savings Bank	2,700,000			20	20	2,210	2,210		4,420
<u>Totals</u>	<u>214,215,000</u>	<u>594</u>	<u>123</u>	<u>624</u>	<u>845</u>	<u>60,620</u>	<u>136,670</u>	<u>36,000</u>	<u>799,028</u>

# HAROLD'S SQUARE

## 123-139 E. STATE STREET



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2016/2017; 18 month construction; ready to proceed with gap filling assistance

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Shovel ready; Site Plan approval obtained, CIITAP incentives approved

**TOTAL COST:** \$36 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** up to \$36 million

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** TBD

**TOTAL SF:** 136,049 SF

**OFFICE:** 14,460 SF **RETAIL:** 11,410 SF **OTHER:** 11,600 SF rehab + 10 floors of new housing

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** 86

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**

**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 100

**PERMANENT JOBS:** 90 (75 office; 15 retail)

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Harold's Square is a \$36 million critical anchor mixed-use urban infill project including housing, retail, and office space, slated for construction in 2016/2017 on the Commons in downtown Ithaca. Harold's Square will be the first new building on the pedestrian mall in 20 years. The Commons underwent a \$15 million renovation, and Harold's Square is the final piece that will transform the Commons into a premier regional destination that attracts an educated and engaged working population to downtown.

The building has two fronts with two distinct personalities. The Commons facade is designed to emulate the scale and texture of the historic buildings located within the district. The south face is modern and extends to the allowed height restrictions and connects to the existing City of Ithaca parking structure. The entry includes a two story atrium linking the transit hub to the Commons. As the central core expands beyond the Ithaca Commons to include Green Street and Clinton Street, these connectors are increasingly important and expected. Modeling this corridor and its connection to parking and other amenities will be a critical part of this project.

**HOUSING:** The project will provide 150 new beds (86 units) of market rate housing in a market where limited housing supply is unparalleled (0.5% vacancy rate). The new attractive housing units will bring new residents to downtown who will then partake in the arts, culture, dining, shopping, visiting major educational institutions, and nearby entertainment.

**RETAIL:** New retail square footage will supply space for a regional/national anchor. It is estimated that a transformational retail anchor could increase tourism to downtown Ithaca by 20%, resulting in 1.2 million visitors annually and cause a rise of approximately \$81.4 million in visitor expenditures (Nielsen). L Enterprises will pursue a regional or national boutique tenant to locate their retail on the first floor 16,000 square feet with leasing targeting clothing, services and specialty retail e.g. an Apple Store, or designer apparel tenants PrAna or Uniqlo.

**OFFICE:** Harold's square will add 14,460 sq.ft. of Class A office stock plus innovative space in the rehabilitated buildings. This will serve to draw employment and services to the core and avoid sprawl, while adding 75 office jobs. The premium office space will serve to retain a business or attract a regional tenant and is being marketed to professional service firms, healthcare providers, and academic institutions.

### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- First new construction on the Commons in a generation; rebuilds approximately one block
- Creates pedestrian links to Green Street and retail front facing Green Street
- Preserves and rehabilitates historic William Henry Miller building
- Adds key new retail space to the shopping core
- Adds critical mass of housing to downtown
- The project is a one-phase development with demolition and construction occurring consecutively in order to minimize the disturbance to neighboring businesses, tourism, and overall project costs.
- Adjacent to transit and car share

### CONTACT

**L Enterprises, LLC**  
**Managing partner: David Lubin**  
**Horseheads, NY**

# DOWNTOWN ITHACA CONFERENCE CENTER

## FINAL LOCATION TO BE SELECTED



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2017/2018

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Feasibility study underway

**TOTAL COST:** Estimated \$4 million (TDB by study)

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** up to \$2 million

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** TBD

**TOTAL SF:** up to 15,000 SF

**OFFICE:** N/A **RETAIL:** N/A **OTHER:** estimated 15,000 SF, depending on study results

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** N/A

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**
**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 50

**PERMANENT JOBS:** 20

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

To date, nearly all conference activity in Ithaca occurs on one of the university campuses. This project will create a downtown community conference and meeting center designed to augment and complement the four major hotels of Downtown Ithaca.

Currently, the Downtown Ithaca Alliance is commissioning a feasibility study and business plan from a national meeting facility consulting firm to determine the size, amenity package, and organizational structure of the Center.

It is anticipated that the Center will focus on meetings ranging up to 500 people. It will be managed by one or more of the downtown hotels. An ownership structure will be recommended by the feasibility study.

Several candidate locations have been identified for this project. Upon completion of the feasibility study and business plan, a preferred location will be selected, based on cost, funding, and fit criteria.

### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Project will occupy vacant downtown space
- Project will provide considerable mid-week foot traffic for retailers and restaurants
- Fills a chronic community need for off-campus conference and meeting space
- Project supports the major private sector investment in downtown hotel rooms

### CONTACT

Gary Ferguson,  
Executive Director  
Downtown Ithaca Alliance  
Ithaca, NY

# TOMPKINS CO. HERITAGE EDUCATION CENTER

## FINAL LOCATION TO BE SELECTED



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2017/2018

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Concept and feasibility planning

**TOTAL COST:** Estimated \$5 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** TBD

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** TBD

**TOTAL SF:** 22,000 SF

**OFFICE:** 10,000 SF **RETAIL:** 2,000 SF **OTHER:** 10,000 SF, public display/museum space

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** N/A

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**

**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 25

**PERMANENT JOBS:** 5

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The History Center in Tompkins County is leading a project to co-locate several non-profits into one collaborative space, initially being referenced as a Heritage Education Center, which will serve as a community hub celebrating our rich history, heritage and culture in an exciting, synergistic way. The proposed center would provide exhibits, resources, and experiences for residents and tourists to be engaged with each other and with the county and the region’s rich history and heritage.

A group of cultural leaders in Tompkins County, New York, initially met in 2015 to envision a new center in downtown Ithaca that engages residents and guests in a vibrant exploration of our unique community. Key partners include The History Center in Tompkins County, the Tompkins County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Historic Ithaca, Ithaca Aviation Heritage Association and the Wharton Studio Museum. Additional organizations are being considered to make this a dynamic history, heritage and cultural center. Discussions are also underway with Cornell University, Ithaca College and Tompkins Cortland Community College inviting them to have a presence, linking with the community and providing a grounding for students and their parents.

Spearheaded by The History Center and the Convention and Visitors Bureau, we envision a center that celebrates our cultural heritage by offering exhibits that inspire and motivate visitors to experience sites throughout the county that personally interest them. The center will be a generation to generation education and research center. It will provide opportunities to gather and through the sharing of personal narratives to build community and understanding.

Preliminary investigation suggests a space of between 20,000-25,000 square feet. The center would include a reception area, exhibits, retail, meeting and program rooms, a research library, offices, workspaces, archives and collections, bathrooms and a kitchen.

The Heritage Education Center would become a vital component of a revitalized downtown welcoming residents and tourists alike and providing an overview, through curated learning experiences, of what is unique about this place. Ithaca and Tompkins County are authentic places with rich and multiple narratives. The Center will orient visitors to a wide range of heritage tourism opportunities. It would be an asset to the region building off from initiatives such as the Discovery Trail.

### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Provide a dynamic “generation to generation” education and research center where all county residents see some aspect of their history collected, archived, interpreted and/or reflected.
- Expand the last Ithaca Discovery Trail member organization into new space that will serve as a visitor attraction and traffic generator for Downtown Ithaca.
- Ability to offer collaborative programming/exhibits, resulting in greater variety of offerings and depth of programming to feature and serve new, diverse local audiences.
- Ability to offer broader set of programming/exhibits throughout year to enhance visitor/tourist appeal
- Provide economies of scale for a collaborating group of nonprofit organizations
- Provide an expanded downtown visitor information & orientation center

### CONTACT

**Rod Howe,**  
Executive Director  
The History Center  
Ithaca, NY

# TOMPKINS FINANCIAL HEADQUARTERS

## 100 BLOCK OF E. SENECA ST. BTW DEWITT MALL & SENECA PLACE



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2016/2017; 14 month construction

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Project has received all approvals and CIITAP award

**TOTAL COST:** \$30 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** up to \$30 million

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** TBD

**TOTAL SF:** 110,000 SF

**OFFICE:** 105,000 SF **RETAIL:** 5,000 SF **OTHER:** N/A

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** N/A

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**

**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 100

**PERMANENT JOBS:** 300

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Tompkins Financial, the growing parent company of community banks located throughout New York State and Tompkins Insurance agencies, has opted to build a new corporate headquarters in Downtown Ithaca. The 110,000 SF building will contain all Tompkins Financial operations currently spread among five downtown buildings and one major suburban facility. The project will bring and retain 300 jobs in Downtown, including 75 new jobs from the corporation's expansion activities. The ground floor will be devoted to retail banking and insurance services.

The project will be located in the 100 block of East Seneca Street in a classic in-fill location currently used for a bank drive-thru. The seven story building will fill the zoning envelope and meet the office space needs of Tompkins Financial for the foreseeable future.

By consolidating employees into a new headquarters building, the company is also freeing up significant office space throughout downtown that can be used to attract use new office and professional tenants as well as provide key venues for other proposed downtown projects, such as the Heritage Center.

### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Anchors the corporate headquarters of Tompkins Financial in Downtown Ithaca for years to come
- Enables the growing corporation to absorb new employees into their downtown headquarters.
- By consolidating units located in five other downtown buildings, provides Downtown with added inventory for growth and development.
- Provides a landmark in-fill building that completes a major block in Downtown
- Creates 75 new jobs and relocates suburban jobs back into the Downtown

### CONTACT

**Greg Hartz,**  
**President**  
**Tompkins Trust Company**  
**Ithaca, NY**

# CITY CENTRE ON THE COMMONS

## 301 EAST STATE / MLK STREET



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2017; 16 month construction

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Preparing for Site Plan Review

**TOTAL COST:** \$50 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** up to \$50 million

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** TBD

**TOTAL SF:** 200,000 SF

**OFFICE:** N/A    **RETAIL:** 10,000 SF    **OTHER:** 9,000 SF

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** 250

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**

**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 100

**PERMANENT JOBS:** up to 38 retail

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This proposed project would develop the Trebloc block into a major landmark mixed-use building. Located adjacent to the Ithaca Commons, this project would occupy an entire city block that had been razed during urban renewal and has since been home to a suburban style one story building and surface parking. The new 200,000 SF project would consist of ground floor retail and eight floors of market rate apartments (250 total units). The retail would help to extend Downtown's retail core one block east of the Commons and serve as a strong draw for students from both Cornell and Ithaca College. The housing component addresses the chronic need for downtown/urban housing and provides it at a key downtown location.

### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Create a major addition to Downtown retail in the block east of the Commons
- Provides density development in a key underutilized block razed during urban renewal
- Provides a strong visual presence at the east entrance to downtown
- Brings up to an additional 30 retail jobs to the heart of Downtown
- Adjacent to transit and car share

# SENECA ST. DRIVE THRU SITE REDEVELOPMENT

## FORMER PARKING & BANK DRIVE THRU AT E. SENECA & THE COMMONS



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2017/2018; 15 month construction

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Project is in concept planning stages

**TOTAL COST:** \$20 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** up to \$20 million

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** TBD

**TOTAL SF:** 80,000 SF

**OFFICE:** N/A **RETAIL:** 8,000 SF **OTHER:** N/A

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** 130

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**

**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 100

**PERMANENT JOBS:** 20

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Ithaca Renting Company has expressed interest in a new development at the key vacant site located at the north end of the Ithaca Commons. This site was a former bank drive thru and parking lot and has been identified as one of Downtown Ithaca's most desirable in-fill development locations.

The project would be a mixed-use high rise building with ground floor retail and approximately 130 units of housing. The retail space would be strategically located on the Commons and adjacent to both garage parking and the existing Hilton Garden Hotel.

### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Key in-fill development project at one of Ithaca's most prominent intersections
- Creates an anchor building for the north end of the Commons pedestrian mall
- Utilizes the existing Seneca Street Garage plus Seneca Street downtown transit hub

### CONTACT

Nathan Lyman,  
Ithaca Renting Company  
Ithaca, NY

# HISTORIC STATE THEATRE EXPANSION

## 100 BLOCK OF WEST STATE / MLK STREET



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2017

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Project feasibility and design work underway

**TOTAL COST:** \$1 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** up to \$0.5 million  
(including existing funding from the Park Foundation)

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** TBD

**TOTAL SF:** 1,000 SF

**OFFICE:** N/A **RETAIL:** 1,000 SF **OTHER:** Includes lobby expansion

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** N/A

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**
**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 10

**PERMANENT JOBS:** 2 (new)

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### A Working Air Conditioning System

The State Theatre of Ithaca was one of the first buildings in Tompkins County to have air conditioning. A system was installed in 1936, but it ceased working in the 1980s and has never been replaced. Rehabilitating it is not an option.

STI has been steadily restoring the building, focusing on projects that improve safety as well as the theater-going experience for our patrons. Restoring the A/C fits in with our long-term plans. This would allow us to operate year-round, instead of just 9 months out of the year. Transitioning to a year-round operation could eventually help us become less reliant on the community for annual operating support.

A growing number of visitors among our customers, as well as the 100+ volunteers who staff the shows as ushers are older or experiencing health issues impacted by intense heat or "stuffy" conditions. Air conditioning becomes a safety factor for those visitors. Making the Theatre more comfortable in the warmest months will also help us increase revenue. Our performances decrease along with ticket sales in the summer months, and providing a cool, enjoyable space for our patrons will aid our sustainability.

We are completing a feasibility study this summer which will help us examine costs of a variety of options and allow us to plan how to move forward.

#### Increase Space for Concessions / VIP Members

Our lobby is extremely small for the size of our venue. Concession sales currently make up 10% of our income stream and with expanded space for concessions, these numbers will increase dramatically. Sharing a wall with our lobby, we currently have over 1,000 square feet of vacant space that would be perfect for dedicated concessions sales. With high ceilings and large windows letting in an abundance of natural light, the vacant space could also be used as a special VIP space before shows. This will directly help us grow our VIP Membership base. Renting it out to private parties will also generate additional revenue for the theatre.

#### Replace Outdated Exit Doors

The doors that are original to the building are located at the entrance under the marquee as well as in and around the lobby. Some of these doors are incredibly outdated and need to be upgraded. This will help the theatre become more energy efficient (some of the old doors leak air like a sieve!) and would also improve the safety of the building.

(Continued on next page)

### CONTACT

**Doug Levine,**  
Executive Director  
State Theatre of Ithaca  
Ithaca, NY

# HISTORIC STATE THEATRE EXPANSION

## 100 BLOCK OF WEST STATE / MLK STREET

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION (CONT.)

#### Improve Handicap Accessibility

Out of our 1,600 seats, The State Theatre currently only offers 10 handicap seats. We would like to double that amount by 2017. In order to reach this goal, we need to remove a couple of rows of seats and level the floor. The total cost of this project includes consultation as well as the material and labor costs for the installation of accessible seating. Material costs include the cement for leveling the floor after seats are removed, as well as costs for any railings and companion seats installed. Labor costs include hiring contractors to remove current seating in the two back rows of the theater and to level the floor to make it accessible.

#### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Will provide a year round venue for the City and region, adding more event dates and drawing more foot traffic to downtown
- Likely to increase foot traffic by 10,000 people, resulting in greater economic spin-off activity for downtown restaurants, drinking establishments, and shops
- An enlarged lobby will allow for greater pre- and post-event activities, increase concession sales, and provide for more financial stability for this key downtown institution
- Work will enhance accessible for people with disabilities
- Based on the Americans for the Arts – Arts and Economic Prosperity III Calculator, The State Theatre of Ithaca currently generates more than \$2.3 million in annual revenue for area businesses.

# CANOPY BY HILTON HOTEL

THE BLOCK BOUNDED BY S. AURORA, SENECA WAY, & E. STATE / MLK STREET



## PROJECT AT A GLANCE

### PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

2016/2017; 14 month construction

### PROJECT STATUS:

Project has received all approvals and CIITAP award

### TOTAL COST: \$24 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** up to \$24 million; \$18 million loan

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** CIITAP; IURA loan

**TOTAL SF:** 74,475 SF

**OFFICE:** N/A **RETAIL:** 2,000 SF **OTHER:** 72,475 SF

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** N/A

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** 123

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**

**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 100

**PERMANENT JOBS:** 47

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Canopy by Hilton is a 7 story 123 room upscale boutique hotel to be located in the heart of Downtown Ithaca. The construction site consists of surface parking lots created by urban renewal after the razing of the Strand Theater. The site combines two vacant parcels- one a city owned lot. The project will front onto both Seneca Way and East State/MLK Street. The project is being developed by Ithaca hotelier Lighthouse Hotels.

Canopy is a new upscale boutique line being rolled out by Hilton. This is one of 11 such projects worldwide, with all the others in major markets. The line promotes its use of local character throughout the public and private spaces. The hotel will include a restaurant/patio lounge. It will have pedestrian connections with Aurora Street's Restaurant Row and the Commons via East State Street.

## IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Provides a key fourth anchor hotel for Downtown Ithaca
- Estimated value of increased assessment- \$15 million
- Project will generate 40,000- 45,000 new visitors/year projected to stay an average 1.9 nights
- These visitors will create an estimated \$7 million in annual spend
- Project generates \$3,286,486 in new property taxes over 10 years, with the stepped abatement
- The project will be working with the Hospitality Education Training Program

## CONTACT

Neil Patel,  
Downtown Ithaca Associates, LLC,  
Lighthouse Hotels  
Ithaca, NY

# JOURNAL BUILDING

## 123 WEST STATE STREET



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2018

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Project is in concept stage

**TOTAL COST:** \$1 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** up to \$1 million

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** TBD

**TOTAL SF:** 10,000 SF

**OFFICE:** 5,000 SF    **RETAIL:** 5,000 SF    **OTHER:** N/A

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** N/A

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**
**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 15

**PERMANENT JOBS:** 25

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Urban Core LLC is considering a project that would create an interior pedestrian way flanked by small, micro retail units. The walkway would comprise the ground floor of the current Journal Building and would connect State Street and the Commons with the popular Press Bay Alley retail complex fronting onto Green Street. Press Bay Alley is also a project of Urban Core LLC. The project would enable start-up retail entrepreneurs to find quality space in the downtown Commons area.

### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Helps to anchor the important State Theatre block immediately west of the Commons;
- Provides a pedestrian pathway and link from State Street and the Commons directly to Press Bay Alley
- Create micro retail spaces for start-up retail enterprises

### CONTACT

John Guttridge,  
Urban Core LLC  
Ithaca, NY

# DEWITT HOUSE

----- NORTH CAYUGA STREET (AT THE CORNER OF CAYUGA & COURT)



## PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2016/2017; 15 month construction

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Developer has been selected by the County; Project is in site plan review

**TOTAL COST:** \$30 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** up to \$30 million

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** TBD

**TOTAL SF:** 72,500 SF

**OFFICE:** N/A **RETAIL:** 4,000 SF **OTHER:** 2,000 SF (community space)

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** 60

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**

**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 100

**PERMANENT JOBS:** 5

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

DeWitt House is a mixed-use, four story new construction project to be located on the site of the former Tompkins County public library. Located across from DeWitt Park, the County undertook a call for developers and eventually selected Ithaca based Travis Hyde properties. The proposed building will feature 60 one and two bedroom housing units aimed at seniors (55+). The ground floor will also have a retail space plus a community space for the building and adjacent senior citizens center. The plan also calls for 40 on-site parking spaces.

## IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Redevelops the long vacant former County library
- Provides housing at a key downtown location adjacent to DeWitt park and the Fall Creek neighborhood

## CONTACT

Frost Travis,  
Travis Hyde Properties  
Ithaca, NY

# CAYUGA STREET INFRASTRUCTURE

## 100 BLOCK NORTH AND 100 BLOCK SOUTH CAYUGA STREET



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

#### PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

2017

#### PROJECT STATUS:

Engineering and cost estimates completed

**TOTAL COST:** \$0.25 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** N/A

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** up to \$0.25 million

**TOTAL SF:** N/A

**OFFICE:** N/A **RETAIL:** N/A **OTHER:** Repair/replacement of street infrastructure

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** N/A

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**

**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 10

**PERMANENT JOBS:** N/A (no direct new jobs)

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

While the Commons has been completely rebuilt, the key Cayuga Street corridor at the western edge of the pedestrian mall remains in need of some basic infrastructure improvement. This upgrading has been deemed necessary for further growth and development in this section of downtown.

Currently, the 100 North and South Cayuga Street blocks are significantly deficit in lighting and street-scape amenities. Pedestrians actually avoid these blocks in evening and nighttime hours, resulting in retail and office business disinvestment in the area. Street lighting has deteriorated over the years, with a majority of metal poles having rusted and fallen. This results in severe dark spots throughout the area. Similarly, the 1980's vintage sidewalk amenities (planters, benches) have aged out and require replacing.

This project would address these key amenities and help position this street for further private re-investment. This project would replace and add street lamps to these two blocks, utilizing historic pedestrian scale street lamps currently owned by City that were removed from the old Commons. New underground electrical lines would be needed to connect all the lamps. Old planters and benches would be removed and replaced with more functional and contemporary designs.

### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- These two blocks of Cayuga Street serve as key links between the Commons and other major downtown destinations - DeWitt Mall and its famous Moosewood Restaurant to the north and Coltivare, Hotel Ithaca, the Public library and the Cayuga Parking Garage to the south.
- This improved infrastructure will stimulate greater retail and office occupancy along this corridor and will improve public perception and utilization of this key street.

### CONTACT

Tim Logue,  
City Engineer  
City of Ithaca, NY

# 202 THE COMMONS BUILDING

## 202 EAST STATE STREET



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2016/2017

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Project received needed entitlements, pending SHPO review

**TOTAL COST:** \$4 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** up to \$4 million

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** RTC's (historic tax credits)

**TOTAL SF:** 33,584 SF

**OFFICE:** N/A **RETAIL:** 5,000 SF **OTHER:** 28,584 SF of housing

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** 33

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**
**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 20 (est.)

**PERMANENT JOBS:** 10 (est.)

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This former bank and office building is slated for renovation into new ground floor commercial and 33 units of market rate rental housing. The seven story building has historically been an office building but its small floor plates today make it far more suitable for housing users. This project consists of improvements to the retail, former bank space and extensive gut rehab to floors two through seven.

### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Ground floor space vacated by Chemung Canal Bank
- Will bring customized housing units to the center of the Commons
- Renovates and improves one of Downtown's oldest commercial properties

### CONTACT

Nathan Lyman,  
Ithaca Renting Company  
Ithaca, NY

# ELMIRA SAVING BANK – NEW LOCATION

## 602 WEST STATE STREET - DOWNTOWN ITHACA



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2017

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Project is seeking approvals and variances

**TOTAL COST:** \$2.7 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** \$2.7 million

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** N/A

**TOTAL SF:** 4,420 SF

**OFFICE:** 2,210 SF    **RETAIL:** 2,210 SF    **OTHER:** N/A

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** N/A

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**
**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 20

**PERMANENT JOBS:** 20

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Displaced by impending redevelopment at their current downtown Trebloc location, the Elmira Savings Bank has acquired property at the corner of West State and Meadow Streets to relocate their downtown Ithaca branch operation. An existing two story vacant building will be rehabilitated and expanded to create new retail banking space on the ground floor and rental office space on the second floor. A drive thru will also be added.

### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Keeps an important financial institution in the downtown area
- Restores and re-occupies an existing vacant property at a key, visible corner location

### CONTACT

Elmira Savings Bank  
Corporate Offices;  
Holt Architects  
Ithaca, NY

# 201-207 NORTH AURORA

201-207 NORTH AURORA ST. (CORNER OF AURORA & SENECA)



## PROJECT AT A GLANCE

### PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

2018

### PROJECT STATUS:

Project has site control and has initiated preliminary site plan review

**TOTAL COST:** \$10 million (est.)

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** up to \$10 million

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** TBD

**TOTAL SF:** approx. 40,000 SF

**OFFICE:** N/A **RETAIL:** 5,000 SF **OTHER:** 35,000 SF of housing

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** approx. 35 units

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**

**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 75 (est.)

**PERMANENT JOBS:** 20 (est.)

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A partnership of three local Ithacans has come together to investigate the potential to develop a key entrance gateway to Downtown Ithaca, the corner at Seneca & Aurora Street. Located at the base of East Hill (home of Cornell), this location has been assembled by the trio for a development project. Working with STREAM Collaborative, the group has submitted early plans to the Ithaca Planning Board for a six story, "warm warehouse look" new construction mixed-use building with ground floor retail and approximately 35 units of housing.

## IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Would provide dense new development at a key entrance gateway to downtown from Cornell
- Would increase the amount of retail space on Aurora Street, strengthening the retail appeal of the street

## CONTACT

Todd Fox (Visum Development),  
Charlie O'Connor, Bryan Warren  
Ithaca, NY

# WINTER VILLAGE TRAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

SIX MILE CREEK FROM DOWNTOWN EAST TO THE WILDFLOWER PRESERVE  
AND SOUTHWEST TO ROUTE 13 & WEGMANS



## PROJECT AT A GLANCE

### PROPOSED SCHEDULE:

2017/2018

### PROJECT STATUS:

Concept planning underway; several downtown portions are complete

### TOTAL COST: TBD

### PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS: TBD

### PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE: TBD

### TOTAL SF: N/A

OFFICE: N/A    RETAIL: N/A    OTHER: Pedestrian trail infrastructure

### TOTAL HOUSING UNITS: N/A

### TOTAL LODGING UNITS: N/A

### AFFORDABLE UNITS:

### CONSTRUCTION JOBS: 20

**PERMANENT JOBS:** an amenity for businesses and individuals  
looking to work & live downtown

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

One of Ithaca's premier natural assets is Six Mile Creek, a river that drains into the Cayuga Lake inlet next to Wegman's and meanders through the southern part of Downtown Ithaca. While portions of the downtown area have been hardscaped, these portions have yet to be connected. Further, there are plans to extend the trail east through the Six Mile Creek gorge to the wild flower preserve and southwest from Downtown through the Southside neighborhood to Route 13 and the creek terminus near Wegman's.

Funds from the DRI program would be extremely important in jump starting this crucial downtown infrastructure project.

## IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- This trail would serve as a visitor attraction, enabling tourists to easily access a gorge from the heart of Downtown.
- This trail would serve as an alternative way for South and East Hill residents to access Downtown Ithaca, serving as a connective link between these neighborhoods and the core.
- This trail would help to stimulate further development near the creek, particularly the undeveloped real estate on the eastern end of the Gateway site.

## CONTACT

Tim Logue,  
City Engineer  
City of Ithaca, NY

# GREEN ST. PARKING GARAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

## 100 E. GREEN ST. BLOCK BTW CITY HALL & THE MARRIOTT HOTEL



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2017

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Engineering and cost estimates completed

**TOTAL COST:** \$ \_\_\_ million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** N/A

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** up to \$ \_\_\_ million

**TOTAL SF:** 100,000 SF

**OFFICE:** N/A **RETAIL:** N/A **OTHER:** N/A

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** N/A

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**
**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** 30

**PERMANENT JOBS:** Will leverage and affect hundreds of jobs

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Green Street Garage is a City owned and operated public parking facility that serves the middle and southern sections of Downtown Ithaca. Consisting of 450 spaces, the garage was built in 19\_\_ to serve the Commons and the then new Center Ithaca building and area. Now 40 years old, this key piece of Downtown infrastructure has worn out and requires immediate attention to rehabilitate or replace.

Back in 3005, the City replaced the center third of this garage when the Cayuga place project was slated to begin construction. This center section has a long life span and is able to accommodate additional floors, if needed. Both the east and west ends of the garage are deemed in need of rehabilitation or replacement.

The cost to rehabilitate and restore the garage is \$ \_\_\_\_\_. The cost to replace the worn two thirds of the garage is \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Funds from the DRI program would be extremely important in jump starting this crucial downtown infrastructure project.

### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- The garage serves as the primary consumer parking garage for the Commons, Center Ithaca, City Hall, the Cinemapolis movie theater, and Urban Outfitters/Cayuga Place. It is an essential piece of infrastructure for the soon to open Marriott Hotel and will critical for Harold's Square and the proposed Trebloc project.
- The future of a quarter million SF of new construction will demand on our ability to fix and upgrade this infrastructure.
- Approximately half of all Downtown Ithaca business make use of the Green Garage.

### CONTACT

Tim Logue,  
City Engineer  
City of Ithaca, NY

# DOWNTOWN LOAN FUND – ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

## DOWNTOWN TARGET AREA



### PROJECT AT A GLANCE

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE:**

2017

**PROJECT STATUS:**

Concept stage

**TOTAL COST:** \$0.25 million

**PRIVATE INVESTMENT DOLLARS:** TBD

**PUBLIC DOLLARS BY SOURCE:** \$0.25 million

**TOTAL SF:** N/A

**OFFICE:** N/A    **RETAIL:** N/A    **OTHER:** Fund will assist businesses to open and expand, adding new square footage

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:** N/A

**TOTAL LODGING UNITS:** N/A

**AFFORDABLE UNITS:**
**CONSTRUCTION JOBS:** TBD

**PERMANENT JOBS:** Will leverage and affect new and expanding businesses, resulting in new job growth

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Retail and knowledge based businesses could benefit from a fund that would assist them in tenant fit out for their downtown projects. Many downtown spaces do not come “ready to go” and require some level of tenant improvement. The magnitude of this tenant fit out often spells the difference between a deal being successful or not happening.

One way to assist with this issue is to create a downtown loan fund to be used for priority retail and knowledge based/creative economy businesses to assist in their tenant fit out. The fund would be a lending fund, with intentions to revolve. It would be able to leverage private resources, but provide some level of support that could enable businesses to proceed with leases that will require some added level of improvement.

On a policy level, much the fund’s resources would be devoted to items that would remain with the building over time, helping to add longer term value to the downtown district.

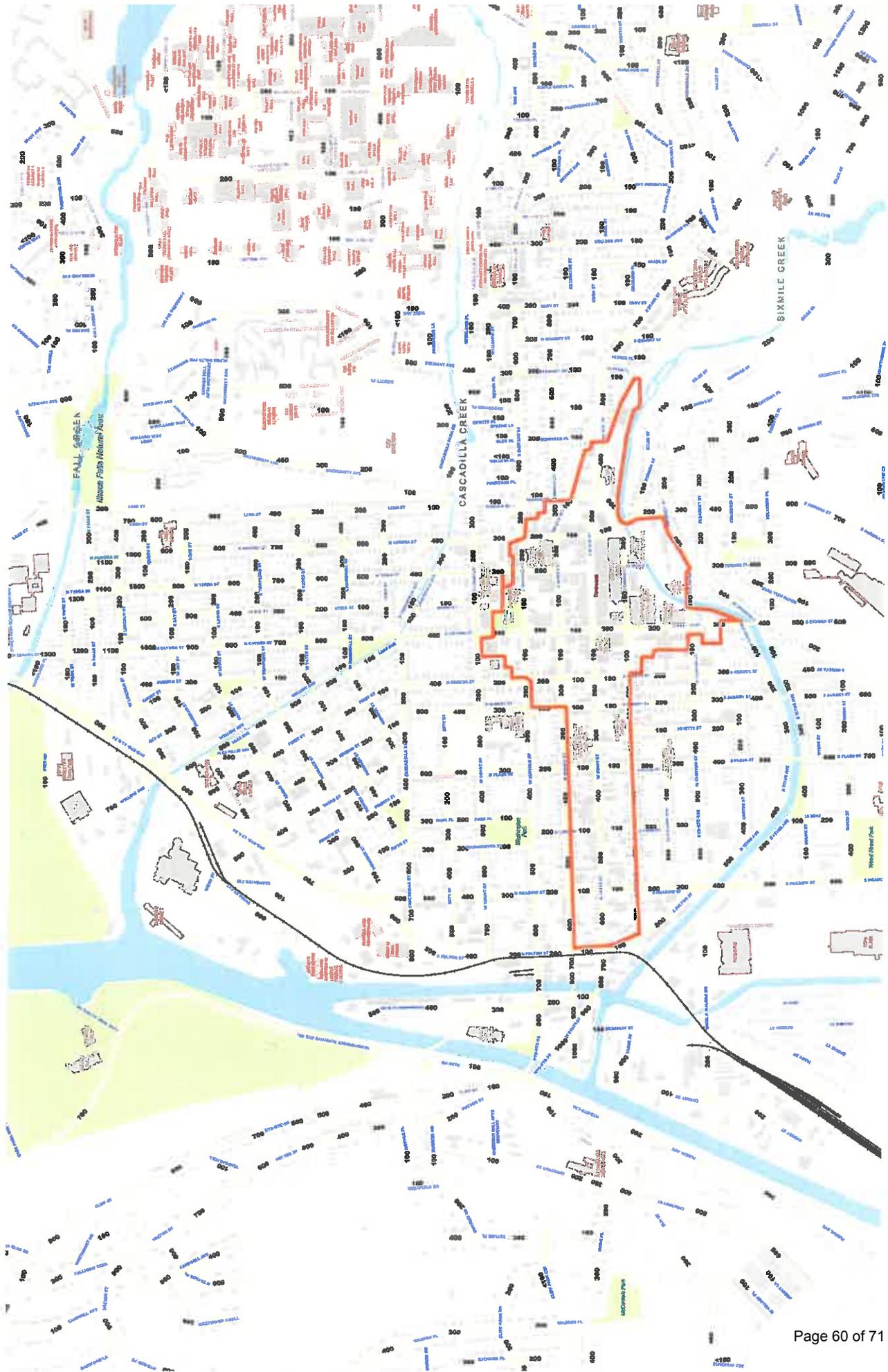
The fund would be capitalized by DRI and be administered by the Downtown Ithaca Alliance, with consultation and help from the City IURA and local commercial lenders.

### IMPACT ON DOWNTOWN:

- Will serve as a tool for attracting and securing new retail and knowledge based business
- Will leverage other private resources from tenants
- Will result in increased occupancy

### CONTACT

Gary Ferguson,  
Executive Director  
Downtown Ithaca Alliance  
Ithaca, NY





**LOFTS @ SIX MILE CREEK**  
45 UNITS OF MARKET-RATE APARTMENTS  
COMPLETED AND OCCUPIED  
BLOOMFIELD/SCHON  
\$11 MILLION



**SHALIMAR BUILDING**  
7 UNITS OF MARKET-RATE HOUSING + OFFICE/RETAIL  
COMPLETION IN 2016  
JOHN SNYDER ARCHITECTS & MOCKINGBIRD PAPERIE  
\$2 MILLION



**SENECA WAY**  
38 UNITS OF MARKET-RATE APARTMENTS + OFFICES  
COMPLETED AND OCCUPIED  
NEWMAN DEVELOPMENT & BRIAN WARREN  
\$13 MILLION



**BRECKENRIDGE PLACE**  
50 UNITS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING  
COMPLETED AND OCCUPIED  
INHS & PATHSTONE  
\$15 MILLION



**THE IVES HOUSE**  
3 UNITS OF HOUSING (INCOME RESTRICTED)  
COMPLETED  
TRAVIS/GUTTRIDGE  
\$0.3 MILLION



**104 EAST STATE**  
3 UNITS OF HOUSING (INCOME RESTRICTED)  
COMPLETED  
FRED SCHOEPS  
\$0.3 MILLION



**ARGOS INN**  
10 ROOMS FINISHED, 13 TOTAL  
PUB/BAR ON GROUND FLOOR  
COMPLETED AND OPEN  
\$1 MILLION



**MARRIOTT HOTEL**  
159 ROOMS, FULL SERVICE  
UNDER CONSTRUCTION, OPENING SPRING 2016  
URGO HOTELS  
\$32.1 MILLION



**HOTEL ITHACA**  
PHASE ONE (RENOVATION OF TOWER) COMPLETE  
NEW SECOND BUILDING  
OLD UNITS REPLACED  
\$22 MILLION



**PRESS BAY ALLEY**  
RENOVATION OF OLD ITHACA JOURNAL BUILDING  
COMPLETED AND OPEN  
MICRO RETAIL UNITS AND 10,000 SF OF OFFICE SPACE  
\$1 MILLION



**CAREY BUILDING**  
PHASE 1 (2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR FOR REV.), PHASE 2 (+5 FLOORS)  
20 NEW HOUSING UNITS  
SPRING 2016 COMPLETION  
\$4 MILLION



**THE COMMONS**  
NEW PEDESTRIAN MALL  
UPGRADE OF AMENITIES AND SURFACE ELEMENTS  
COMPLETION DATE 7/31/15  
\$15 MILLION



**ROTHSCHILD BUILDING**  
2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR SPACE  
23,000 SQ LEASED TO ACCOUNTANT + MASSAGE SCHOOL  
NEW ELEVATOR/FRONT ENTRANCE  
\$2 MILLION



**SIMEON'S BUILDING**  
COMPLETE BUILDING AND RESTAURANT RENOVATION  
5 NEW HOUSING UNITS  
COMPLETION IN 2016  
\$1 MILLION



**CULTIVARE**  
TC3 EDUCATIONAL PROJECT  
OPEN AND OPERATING  
CULINARY ARTS PROGRAM, TEACHING, RESTAURANT  
\$7 MILLION



**MASONIC TEMPLE**  
RENOVATION OF NATIONAL REGISTER LANDMARK  
4 COMMERCIAL UNITS + UPGRADED INFRASTRUCTURE  
2016 START DATE  
\$1 MILLION



## CITY OF ITHACA

108 East Green Street Ithaca, New York 14850

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR • SVANTE L. MYRICK

Telephone: 607/274-6501 Fax: 607/274-6526

May 24, 2016

Ms. Donna Howell  
Regional Director  
Southern Tier Regional Office  
Empire State Development  
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508  
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Ms. Howell:

I am writing on behalf of the City of Ithaca to offer our support for the application of Downtown Ithaca to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant program.

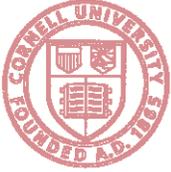
Downtown Ithaca is a vital partner to the City of Ithaca and our partnership has furthered the goal of continuing to build a dense vibrant urban core. I am optimistic that this grant will leverage much positive growth and development in Ithaca. In the broader picture, I believe investment in Downtown Ithaca helps strengthen the economic viability of the greater Southern Tier region.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Svante L. Myrick  
Mayor





**Cornell University**  
**Government and Community Relations**

**Community Relations**  
**Gary Stewart, director**  
110 Day Hall  
Ithaca, New York 14853-2801  
607.255.4666 // 227-5531 (c)  
gary.stewart@cornell.edu

May 27, 2016

Ms. Donna Howell  
Regional Director, Southern Tier Regional Office  
Empire State Development  
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508  
Binghamton, NY 13901

Donna,

We are writing on behalf of Cornell University's Office of Community Relations in support of Downtown Ithaca's application to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant program.

As active board members with the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce, and the Downtown Ithaca Alliance, our office has always been engaged in the health and well-being of downtown's present and future.

The roots of Cornell were formed in downtown Ithaca, home of the University's first commencements and trustee meetings, at the Cornell Library, now the Tompkins County Public Library.

In that light, it was important that Cornell's sesquicentennial celebration in 2015 began in downtown Ithaca, marked by a plaque on The Commons that begins with three simple words: "Thank You, Ithaca."

Cornell has invested heavily in downtown Ithaca in recent years, housing hundreds of professional jobs in at Seneca Place on The Commons, and choosing downtown as the site for the successful business incubator Rev.

Also at this writing, finishing touches are being completed on a downtown Ithaca Cornell store that will be on the tax rolls. The project was formally announced at Cornell's town-gown conference on economic development that attracted 100 people from six states and was held in a downtown Ithaca culinary center.

Our great university would not prosper if downtown Ithaca wasn't vibrant and progressive, and as is the case on both East Hill, and in downtown, there will always be shared challenges and opportunities

It is our hopes to see downtown Ithaca supported through this important program, not because it is treading water, but because its leaders and supporters think big, and take chances, for the benefit and future of Upstate New York.

Cordially,

*Gary Stewart*

Gary Stewart  
Director, Cornell Community Relations  
Vice-chair, Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

Susan Riley

Susan Riley  
Deputy director, Cornell Community Relations  
Board member, Downtown Ithaca Alliance



May 24, 2016

Donna Howell , Regional Director  
Southern Tier Regional Office  
Empire State Development  
44 Hawley Street, # 1508  
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Ms. Howell:

I am pleased to support Ithaca's application for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant program. Significant planning and investment has positioned our community as a shining star in Upstate New York. Ithaca is increasingly seen as the place to be. This award will allow our community to leverage private investment to keep up with demand for housing, business and arts and cultural growth that will transform our community into a sustainable year round downtown.

I have participated on the grant committee and will continue to support the project should we receive the \$10 million award. TCAD is actively working with entrepreneurial companies and has delivering incentives that leveraged over \$145 million in private investment in our downtown in the last three years. We view downtown as a key attribute to attract the next generation of knowledge workers. It is well on its way to having the right mix of housing, jobs, and cultural activities that attract and retain dynamic companies.

Ithaca is a regional job center, providing employment opportunities to over 11,000 incommuters a day. I believe that increased public and private investment targeted to our downtown will strengthen the entire region, making connections with people who live in the Southern Tier.

Sincerely,

Heather D. McDaniel  
Vice President, Director of Economic Development Services



Ithaca Startup Works

315 East State Street  
Ithaca, New York  
14850

May 24, 2016

Ms. Donna Howell  
Regional Director  
Southern Tier Regional Office  
Empire State Development  
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508  
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Ms. Howell:

I am writing on behalf of Rev: Ithaca Startup Works to offer our support for the application of Downtown Ithaca to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant program.

Rev is a partnership between Cornell University, Ithaca College and Tompkins Cortland Community College. When planning the incubator, we deliberately chose a site in the heart of downtown Ithaca – our home. We are committed to helping grow the economy of the area and region, and rooting ourselves in downtown is a critical part of helping support a vibrant and thriving economy.

By providing Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding to downtown Ithaca, New York State can help Ithaca become a beacon for innovation and quality of life, drawing visitors from around the United States and beyond and attracting them to all that upstate New York has to offer. I hope that you will recommend downtown Ithaca to the state for support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T. Schryver" with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom Schryver  
Rev: Ithaca Startup Works



May 24, 2016

Ms. Donna Howell  
Regional Director  
Southern Tier Regional Office  
Empire State Development  
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508  
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Ms. Howell:

I am writing on behalf of the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce and the Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention & Visitors Bureau to offer our support for the application of Downtown Ithaca to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant program.

I'm pleased to have participated on the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Committee exploring the need and justification for Ithaca to be considered for grant funding. I strongly support this application, and would suggest to you that Ithaca is the best place in the Southern Tier Region to make this important grant investment.

As an economic developer; as Chamber President; as Industrial Development Agency board member, and with many other hats I wear regularly—I can tell you that Ithaca is one city in the Southern Tier region that is poised for growth. We will need support from New York State in order to capture and maximize our growth opportunities. Making the investment in Ithaca will benefit and impact our surrounding counties, and the entire Southern Tier Region, in the most positive way.

We are growing fantastic start-up companies, with the help of our business incubator REV: Ithaca Startup Works and the support of Cornell University, Ithaca College, and TC3. We have a fantastic new Commons, which is home to numerous commercial properties that require new investment in order to be revitalized and attract the retailers, office tenants, and residents that will continue growing the Ithaca economy. We are fortunate to have a long list of potential projects which will strengthen our community, add new commercial space, increase housing units downtown, and provide opportunities to organizations which are pillars of the community.

The list of our unique challenges is long. We lack the housing stock necessary to place potential residents where they'd like to live, and to do so affordably. We are an employment hub, but not a housing hub—our continued investment in Ithaca as a great place to live, work, and play will be vital to retaining and growing our workforce—as substantial portion of which comes from the counties in elsewhere in the Southern Tier. We are growing our hotel and tourism infrastructure base, but lack the square footage to attract new anchor retail tenants to complement our other tourism assets. Nearly all projects planned for Ithaca are more expensive to build, and more expensive to operate, than our competitor markets—leaving funding gaps which are a challenge to fill.



Ithaca is special. Downtown Ithaca, and specifically the pedestrian mall—the Commons—is often cited as one of the single biggest drivers of our annual tourist and visitor traffic, which heavily impacts our local economy and whether our businesses thrive. Downtown Ithaca—and the businesses, restaurants, theatres, and arts venues that call it home—is part of the wonderful quality of life we offer that attracts new residents.

We have the opportunity to leverage our past successes, continue to attract new investment, and to further grow our residential and visitor bases—an opportunity that not every community has. This DRI application will help solidify and maximize this opportunity for Ithaca and benefit our neighbors in the Southern Tier as well.

The Chamber, and our Convention and Visitors Bureau, stand ready to continue supporting this effort through committee service, to promote and advocate for projects funded through this effort, and to invest our marketing and social media resources to promote Ithaca's new downtown as this project proceeds over the next many years.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Tavares". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jennifer Tavares, CECD  
President & CEO  
Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce & CVB



**CITY OF ITHACA**  
**108 E. Green Street — 3rd Floor Ithaca, New York 14850-5690**

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, BUILDING, ZONING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
**JoAnn Cornish, Director of Planning and Development**

Phone: 607-274-6550

Fax: 607-274-6559

Email: [dgrunder@cityofithaca.org](mailto:dgrunder@cityofithaca.org)

May 24, 2016

Ms. Donna Howell  
Regional Director  
Southern Tier Regional Office  
Empire State Development  
44 Hawley Street, Rm. 1508  
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Ms. Howell:

I am writing on behalf of the City of Ithaca Department of Planning and Development to offer our support for the application of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant program.

I have not only been a member of the most recent committee for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant program but have been involved in revitalizing our downtown for nearly 30 years. Should we be awarded this grant, it would be my utmost pleasure to work with other professionals to realize this amazing vision for the City of Ithaca.

The City's latest accomplishment was the rehabilitation of our pedestrian mall – The Ithaca Commons, a 15 million dollar project that we hope will act as a catalyst for continued new development and re-investment in downtown. In addition, we have just completed our comprehensive plan "Plan Ithaca", which will be used as a blueprint for change, particularly as it relates both to the physical growth of the city and to the retention and enhancement of quality of life elements, such as parks, neighborhoods, and social equity.

The City of Ithaca is proud to be known as a place of great natural beauty, rich heritage, diverse and vibrant community life, small-city character, and steadfast pursuit of social equity, physical accessibility, livability, and environmental sustainability. The city's stable economy, wealth of natural resources, and recent development trends suggest that our population could continue to grow significantly. If we can simultaneously retain our existing residents and attract newcomers, we have the opportunity to strengthen our role as the economic, social, and cultural center of Tompkins County and the region.

Being awarded the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant will allow the City of Ithaca to maintain its vitality and provide opportunities for new housing and businesses to support the increased population we want to attract.

Thank you for your consideration.

JoAnn Cornish

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "JoAnn Cornish".

Director of Planning and Development  
City of Ithaca  
108 East Green Street  
Ithaca, NY 14850