

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE – LIREDC

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

BASIC INFORMATION

Municipality Name: Incorporated Village of Mineola

Downtown Name: Mineola

County: Nassau

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

Mineola is the County Seat of Nassau County and one of the most populous villages in New York State (pop. 20k, 30k+ daytime). From its original days of being the "crossroads of Long Island" to its later days as the seat of government and industry, the community also grew into one of the oldest U.S. suburban communities. In recent years an aging and declining commercial and light-industrial base has begun evolving into a modern mixed-use workforce housing suburban center.

DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

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

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

The boundaries of our targeted neighborhood would mirror that of our Incentive Zoning overlay district located entirely within our targeted downtown revitalization area in keeping with our Comprehensive Master Plan. It is our commercial and next generation housing hub, adjacent to our public transit hub, and our largest area employer (hospital).

Attach color map clearly identifying areas within the defined downtown.



- 2) **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. Describe how investments in your downtown could positively impact surrounding communities.

Any investment in this area is easily accessible by five (5) similarly sized communities. It would provide transit, commercial, retail, educational, and professional opportunities for anyone in the surrounding communities and the county at large.

- 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.

Over the past ten years, by adhering to Smartgrowth principals and our Master Plan, our village has been able to attract significant private investment into next generation workforce housing under a Transit Oriented Development model. To date, over \$500 million in private investment has flowed into our community primarily in the areas of mixed use, higher density rental housing. Additional public capital could be used to expand and strengthen the supporting infrastructure needed for continued growth, access and enhance public transportation options, particularly rail options, and attract additional residential and retail/entertainment facets needed to support communities.

Leveraged Resources: Public \$6,000,000.00 Private \$500,000,000.00
 Prior NYS Funding/REDC Funding: Amount \$0.00
 Please identify use(s) of prior funding n/a

- 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.

Mineola is a 35-minute commute to NYC by railroad. As such it is attractive to professionals working in the City, at our hospital and research center (Winthrop University Hospital), and students and faculty accessing four nearby universities. In addition, accessibility to the Long Island Railroad and a NYCE Bus System depot makes our location convenient and desirable to employees in all fields and employment levels. In recent years private investment has created a small business incubator attracting new start ups in technology and finance, among other fields. This will continue to grow as new housing and lifestyle options become available to area residents.

- 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.

Mineola is already a community that is committed to its residents' lifestyle choices and recreational activities, having one of the best local parks systems, including a pool complex and athletic fields open to all residents, village-sponsored activities for youth, families, and senior citizens, and cultural activities aimed at a broad range of interests and participants. We have invested in enhancing and expanding these assets and to introduce new opportunities such as additional parks appealing to different interests, e.g., toddler parks, concert venues, and athletic fields, and personal fitness centers. Recent mixed use residential development has been designed to enhance walkability and reduce reliance on automotive transit.

- 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.

Beginning in 2006 the Mineola Master Plan laid out a blueprint for Smartgrowth centering on TOD. A key component was the introduction of Development Incentive Bonus Zoning which allows housing density and increased mixed use development. Additionally, the Village undertook a comprehensive review of its Municipal Code to address quality of life issues and to update zoning to reflect current lifestyles and trends. There have also been village-wide studies conducted on street design and parking. Infrastructure has been surveyed and plans are being developed to address the needs of our growing village over the next 100 years. These are ongoing works.

- 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.

Our incorporated village has an elected village board which, over three successive administrations, has been committed to the concept of revitalizing our downtown, specifically through Smartgrowth and TOD. A cornerstone of this is adherence to our Master Plan, developed as a community-based living document. The lead in any planning under this program would be its chief executive, the Village Mayor.

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

Mineola has been recognized by the media, planning professionals, and academic, business, and community organizations throughout New York for its leadership and work over the last ten years in this area. While there is a world of opportunities available to our village in the revitalization area there are, however, financial limits to what might be done. Additional public resources would help further our progress, allow additional facets to be incorporated into our planning, and would serve as a regional example of the possibilities available to every community.

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

Like any Long Island community, there are challenges to growth such as water supply, sewers, and roadway infrastructure. While our village addresses these basic needs, additional growth and repurposing will require additional investment and expansion of this infrastructure. In addition, like most LI communities, Mineola also faces a limit to open space which means relying on repurposing or redeveloping existing properties.

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

Our existing Comprehensive Master Plan has been and continues to be a roadmap to our success. By having a master plan in place, with corresponding zoning to allow implementation, we are in a position to consider any type of revitalization or community enhancements. This allows swift consideration of any proposal, and community review and input, making it possible to move from concept to implementation far more readily than most LI communities.