



Regional Economic Development Councils



Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Submitted by Borough President James S. Oddo
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Office of Planning and Development



Homes and Community Renewal

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE
Staten Island Borough President's Office

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BASIC INFORMATION

Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region: New York City
Municipality Name: Staten Island
Downtown Name: Downtown Staten Island
County: Richmond

Downtown Description:

Staten Island's Downtown area consists of a 2.5-mile urban corridor along Richmond Terrace and Bay Street between Jersey Street in New Brighton, and Broad Street in Stapleton. This corridor includes the Borough's municipal center and diverse commercial, recreational, cultural and community facility uses. The 5.13-square mile area is comprised of four historic town centers supported and surrounded by residential uses with building typologies ranging from single family detached homes to multi-story, multiple dwellings. The downtown area is the transit hub for the Borough providing local and express bus routes, surface rail (Staten Island Railroad), and the Staten Island Ferry connection with the Borough of Manhattan. Local bus lines from the ferry site also provide easy access to the rest of the Borough.

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.*

Staten Island's Downtown area is situated on the Borough's North Shore and includes the oldest and most densely-populated areas of the Borough. Downtown Staten Island consists of a 2.5-mile urban corridor along Richmond Terrace and Bay Street between Jersey Street in New Brighton; and Broad Street in Stapleton. This corridor includes the Borough's municipal center and diverse commercial, recreational, cultural and community facility uses. The downtown area is comprised of four historic town centers: New Brighton, St. George, Tompkinsville and Stapleton.

- 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.*

The urban corridor is supported and surrounded by a 5.13-square mile catchment area:

- New Brighton (1.31 sq. mi.)
- St. George (.412 sq. mi.)
- Tompkinsville (1.24 sq. mi.)
- Stapleton (2.17 sq. mi.).

The catchment area consists of residential uses with building typologies ranging from single family detached homes to multi-story, multiple dwellings. The downtown area is also the transit hub for the borough providing local and express bus routes, surface rail (Staten Island Railroad), and the Staten Island Ferry connection with the Borough of Manhattan. Local bus lines from the ferry site also provide easy access to the rest of the Borough.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is an opportunity to supplement existing private investment and continue to reimagine this urban corridor to promote development which will better serve the surrounding neighborhoods, provide much-needed attendant services for new residents and businesses realized by new developments currently underway, capitalize on the existing transportation infrastructure and take advantage of the more than 21 million annual passengers and tourists currently services by the Staten Island Ferry. In addition to tourists and commercial and cultural visits, Downtown Staten Island is also a year-round community with approximately 56,000 existing residents.

New Brighton

- Jersey Street and Richmond Terrace are poised to become the platform for a future dedicated busway to better serve tourists and commuters
- A \$1M traffic mitigation fund was established as part of the New York Wheel and Empire Outlets approvals.
- Jersey Street will become the main boulevard to the surrounding user population from the Victory Boulevard corridor to the New North Shore Greenway.
- Pavilion on the Terrace, the last of five Greek revival mansions located in this neighborhood is being restored to its 17th century grandeur as a new catering hall overlooking the Kill Van Kull.
- DCP is reviewing potential rezoning of the New Brighton Corridor to provide new housing and mixed-use opportunities

St. George

New waterfront developments include:

- New York Wheel: planned as the largest observation wheel in North America, with a projection of 30,000 tourists per day.
- Empire Outlets: will be New York City's first outlet center, and host approximately 100 shops of premier brands, an extensive array of waterfront food and beverage concepts and a 190-room boutique hotel with rooftop lounge offering unparalleled views of New York City; 4.5 million visitors are projected annually. Empire Outlets is also pursuing a new ecodock/water taxi service to Manhattan.
- Lighthouse Point: includes retail shops, restaurants, a 164-room boutique hotel, movie theater, 96 residential units and the restoration of historic buildings along the St. George Waterfront.

Tompkinsville

- Many sites are currently under review for new mixed-use developments to provide a broader range of commercial uses and new housing that aligns with the Mayor's affordable housing initiative.
- Lyons Pool is currently under consideration to construct a new community recreational center
- NYCEDC is currently planning the extension of the Promenade at Lighthouse Point through Tompkinsville to connect to the New Stapleton Waterfront.
- The Minthorne Street corridor is currently evolving into an eclectic array of commercial uses with businesses such as Flagship Brewery and Daddy-O's BBQ to service the young professional downtown community.

Stapleton

- The Bay Street Corridor is experiencing enormous private investment. There are new senior housing and attendant community facility opportunities, new affordable housing offerings, new retail and hotel facilities being planned.
- URBYS Staten Island is currently leasing residential units along the Stapleton Waterfront. URBYS includes approximately 1000 residential units, retail stores and restaurants, indoor structured parking, outdoor pool, urban garden with farmer in residence, communal kitchen with chef in residence, filtered water bottling station, indoor Technogym fitness center and bodega.

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.*

Historically, Downtown Staten Island was disrupted by vacant and underutilized manufacturing and waterfront properties that disconnected residential areas from commercial corridors and precluded public access to the waterfront. Current REDC Priority Developments like the NY Wheel, Empire Outlets and Lighthouse Point have effectively changed the private and public investment strategies and the City's approach to rezoning, economic growth, community revitalization and housing affordability. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative investment will provide additional opportunities to solidify the transformation of the downtown area and unlock the new quality of life that will be realized with the plethora of new economic and affordable opportunities for these historically underserved communities.

Ongoing local investments and other current planning initiatives will further catalyze future private and public investments throughout the corridor. Staten Island's Downtown area is enjoying a renaissance led by more than \$1 billion dollars in private investment throughout the corridor.

Continued investment in the St. George municipal hub by the State and City has included: a new \$225M Supreme Court Courthouse and municipal structured parking facility, a \$6M Family Justice Center, capital improvements to other Criminal, Family and Supreme Court facilities, the development of a workforce development center known as Workforce1, the continued expansion of services at the Staten Island Ferry terminal including new SI Arts Culture Lounge, Tourism Information Center, NYC Economic Development initiatives

including terminal and local neighborhood attraction wayfinding initiative, waterfront promenade improvements, Pier 1 activation and programming (DockNYC), the opening of the National Lighthouse Museum, 1M investment to study alternate sites to replace the former Cromwell Recreation Center and \$70M infrastructure investment along the corridor and \$250M investment in new Staten Island-Brooklyn water tunnel ensuring a back-up water supply to the Borough.

Private investment has been led by the New York Wheel, Empire Outlets, Lighthouse Point and Urby of Staten Island:

The \$30M, 630-foot tall observation wheel, known as the New York Wheel will attract more than 3.5M visitors to the corridor each year. The project was designated in Round III as an REDC Priority Development. The project received a \$1.55 million ESD Market NY grant in Round IV of the CFA. The New York Wheel project will create 600 permanent jobs and 350 construction jobs and furthers the regions job growth priority.

Empire Outlets includes public and private investment with funding through New York City, New York State, ESD Capital Grants and other private sources. As of 2015, the project had received public funds by way of (2) ESD Capital Grants. The most current was for \$11,000,000 and another was received in Round III for \$3,500,000. NYS Assistance has amounted to \$61,500,000 and NYC Assistance \$39,250,000. Being a REDC Priority Project, it advances the regional priorities including the creation and retention of jobs with over 1,306 new jobs and 1,267 construction jobs.

Lighthouse Point received a \$1.5 million grant in Round III of the CFA. Lighthouse Point will consist of three new buildings, and the restoration of four historic buildings that will include retail, restaurants, a hotel and residential units. The anchor tenant is Regus, a shared work space provider, who signed a 15-year lease and will occupy approximately 30,000 square feet of the nearly 65,000-square-foot space dedicated to retail and office.

Additionally there will be over an acre of waterfront public open space to be programmed for outdoor concerts, art exhibits, food festivals, and more. There will also be an approximately 300-space parking garage added to the development. The project is expected to create approximately 226 permanent jobs and over 400 construction jobs.

The Department of State (DOS), is investing approximately \$130 million for public infrastructure improvements along the Stapleton Waterfront that include roadway upgrades, bicycle lanes, a continuous waterfront esplanade, and the creation of a tidal wetlands cove for the benefit of the local community.

Pier 1, Staten Island's 775-foot-long public space located south of the St. George Ferry terminal and across from the National Lighthouse Museum, was recently added to the portfolio of DockNYC.

DockNYC is a private company that is under contract with New York City Economic Development Corporation to manage and market berthing sites across the city for a variety of uses, from tug, barge and other maritime operations to recreation, education and culture initiatives. Programming activities include sailboat and historic-vessel cruises, fishing charters, sightseeing tours, and lunch and dinner cruises.

In addition, the NYC Department of City Planning (DCP) is further leveraging private investment and public dollars by rezoning existing manufacturing sites to:

- Create a vibrant, resilient downtown environment providing stronger connections to the Harbor and surrounding communities
- Support creation of new housing, including affordable housing for the broad spectrum expand affordable housing options, for the broad spectrum of downtown needs: seniors, young adults, workforce families and lower income families
- Support existing and new commercial development by encouraging a pedestrian-friendly commercial corridor
- Align investment in infrastructure, public open spaces and services in the downtown area to support current demands and future growth consistent with smart investment strategies previously articulated by the REDC

The DCP initiative will ultimately include more than 2,000 new dwelling units (of which approximately 750 will be affordable units), over 200,000 sf of commercial uses including retail, office and restaurant space and approximately 50,000 sf of community facility space. New initiatives will also provide construction and permanent job opportunities for local residents guided by the local workforce development career center (Workforce 1) in St. George.

Potential for future investment with DRI – Funding:

New Brighton

- Dedicated busway planning initiative: Jersey Street to Ferry Terminal
- Creation of strategic pedestrian crossings or flyovers at Richmond Terrace to better serve user population
- Development of North Shore Greenway Pilot: New York Wheel to Snug Harbor

St. George

- Establish bike rental kiosks at SI Ferry Terminal, New Stapleton Waterfront & Minthorne Street Pedestrian Street Walk to support residents, tourists and local businesses.
Downtown Bicycle Experience: this program will loop bike paths from Jersey Street through St. George Waterfront, SI Ferry Terminal Ramps, Lighthouse Point Promenade, St. George Waterfront Promenade, Front Street, New Stapleton Waterfront, Downtown Stapleton, Bay Street Corridor and Downtown Tompkinsville.
- Implement neighborhood branding initiatives for Downtown Areas including holistic logo with individual community identifiers. Community signage including wayfinding for restaurants, cultural centers, waterfront attractions, mass transit options, other

retail and community facility offerings and schedules for public programming of local events.

- Urban Planning Initiative to create Hyatt/Stuyvesant Street Retail Corridor with distinctive pedestrian sidewalks with planned upland connections from waterfront, sidewalk café spaces, DOT smart street implementation, and programming of local events.
- Pedestrian and streetscape improvements between Nick LaPorte Place and Central Avenue along Bay Street to connect St. George and Tompkinsville.

Tompkinsville

- Opportunities for new public open space planning at the intersection of Victory Boulevard and Central Avenue. The existing parking area, currently functioning in the bed of Central Avenue can be reimagined to accommodate a new public amenity.
- Redesign of Minthorne Street public space into a pedestrian-friendly street mall
- Tompkinsville Park summer event programming – Green Market Corridor (western portion of Bay Street behind park).
- Creation of community garden at Bay Street/Van Duzer Extension/St. Julian Place
- Pedestrian streetscape initiative for Bay Street from Hannah Street to Baltic Street

Stapleton

- Streetscape study to identify alternate parking configurations, traffic patterns and expanded open space planning to accommodate street furniture and sidewalk café locations
- Creation of Stapleton BID and/or Merchant's Association
- "Finger Street" Enhancement Initiative to activate all streets perpendicular to Bay Street and the New Stapleton Waterfront at URBYS Staten Island
- Tappen Park summer event programming and green market.
- The Stapleton Train Station has received a vast amount of feedback from the community on improvements that would better the experience for all that utilize the service. Below is a list of recommendations from prior community engagement:
 - Replacement and of existing MTA fencing with updated MTA- approved security fencing, as well as Installation of see-thru decorative screening along fencing to provide aesthetically pleasing backdrop to station proper.
 - Installation of new tinted concrete sidewalks, pedestrian ramps and approved type bicycle rack at station entrance and a possible curb extension and mid-block raised speed reducer at station entrance to better facilitate bicycle parking and pedestrian safety.
 - Installation of non-standard lighting treatment at station entrance with light pole banners promoting cultural exhibits or public or historical events taking place in the community.
 - Investigate the viability of providing a translucent understory to the overpass to transform and identify station location and to better light the street and sidewalk at station entrance.
 - Establish Ironstate Development as a maintenance partner for the maintenance, repair and upkeep of all landscaped areas and non-standard fixtures.

- Installation of new mulched planting beds with evergreen and flowering plant species along sidewalk at station entrance and the cleaning and repainting of all steel and concrete portions of train overpass at Prospect Street.

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.*

- Empire Outlets will generate over 1,306 new jobs and 1,267 construction jobs
- New York Wheel will create 600 permanent jobs and 350 construction jobs
- The Lighthouse Point project is expected to create approximately 226 permanent jobs and over 400 construction jobs

Over 25% of the population has received a bachelor's degree or higher in the Downtown SI area. The number of college-educated individuals will increase in the area with the activation of the College of Staten Island (CSI) satellite campus. Their focus is to reach commuters and residents in the area that have yet to complete a degree or certificate program.

The CSI Technology Incubator located at 60 Bay Street (across from Lighthouse Point) seeks to build on the growing technology and business community in the North Shore and all around Staten Island. The College of Staten Island is providing significant resources, expertise, and technology to foster local talent in order to stimulate economic development in the downtown area.

There is a significant amount of individuals that are involved in technology or engineering on Staten Island as well as local business that seek external resources when looking to grow or build a business. This location is important for its proximity to Lighthouse Point that will house Regus, an office space provider, and 55 Stuyvesant Tech Center that will provide services through START-UP NY.

Staten Island increased by 32% in private sector employment between 1990 and 2010, compared to only 4% citywide. With thousands of square feet of available commercial office space, Downtown SI can offer businesses an affordable option over many other business districts. Access is readily available to Manhattan, Brooklyn, New Jersey and the rest of Staten Island. Also, Staten Island's broadband connectivity is the one of the best along the east coast, making it especially attractive to tech companies.

Programs like those listed will provide a pipeline of highly skilled talent as well as opportunities for entrepreneurship and job growth.

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 bike ability, and public parks and gathering spaces.*

The Downtown Staten Island area has a rich cultural presence with attractions such as the St. George Theater, Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden, the Staten Island Museum, National Lighthouse Museum and Noble Maritime Collections.

The North Shore Waterfront Esplanade will connect all of these attractions, along with other open space areas including Tompkinsville Park, Tompkinsville Esplanade, the New Stapleton Waterfront and Tappen Park.

The area is seeing a tech community emerge with the 55 Stuyvesant Street Tech Center, College of Staten Island Technology Incubator and Staten Island Makerspace.

Current mixed-use developments include Lighthouse Point Mixed-Use Center, URBX Mixed-Use Development and the Bay Street Corridor Rezoning that will allow for the expansion of mixed-use, residential and commercial building.

- 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.*

Special Zoning Districts - rezoning to provide opportunities for housing and commercial development:

- Bay Street Corridor
- New Brighton Corridor
- Special St. George District
- Special Stapleton Waterfront District

The 120th Police Precinct has increased patrol of the downtown area including "Community Policing" where officers remain in the neighborhoods they're assigned long-term to understand and assess the enforcement needs of the community.

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

The initial local lead for DRI-funded programming would be through the Staten Island Borough President's Office. Local support for revitalization includes the Downtown Council re-emergence, the future for a North Shore BID, \$75K funding for the Jersey Street Local Development Corporation (LDC), New York City Small Business Services, Community Board #1, Staten Island Chamber of Commerce, North Shore Greenway, the New Brighton Coalition of Concerned Citizens, Stapleton Village Merchants Association, Rebuild Cromwell Community Coalition and the community association advisory board established as part of the New York Wheel/Empire Outlets approvals.

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

The Downtown Staten Island area is one of the most culturally diverse regions on Staten Island. The neighborhood of Tompkinsville has one of the largest populations of Sri Lankans outside the country itself. There are large pockets of African communities representing countries such as Liberia, Egypt, Ethiopia and a substantial amount of the countries along the western Coast of Africa. Other large community groups include West Indian and Arab, along with a representation from countries across Europe.

The building up the North Shore, with its accessibility to Manhattan, and the work on Empire Outlets, New York Wheel, Lighthouse Point, and Stapleton Waterfront has and will attract a new demographic to the neighborhood and surrounding areas.

Nearly 35% of the Downtown Staten Island area is young people between the ages of 20 – 35. Over 25% of the population has received a bachelor's degree or higher, and this percentage will continue to rise through programming provided by CUNY and the collaboration between the three local colleges on Staten Island for their "30,000 Degrees in 2025" initiative.

Staten Island is in an exciting place with new infrastructure and rezoning opportunities that will attract new jobs, talent, and add to Staten Island's economic growth.