

## DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE – APPLICATION TEMPLATE

### BASIC INFORMATION

**Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region:** Finger Lakes

**Municipality Name:** Seneca Falls

**Downtown Name:** Seneca Falls

**County:** Seneca

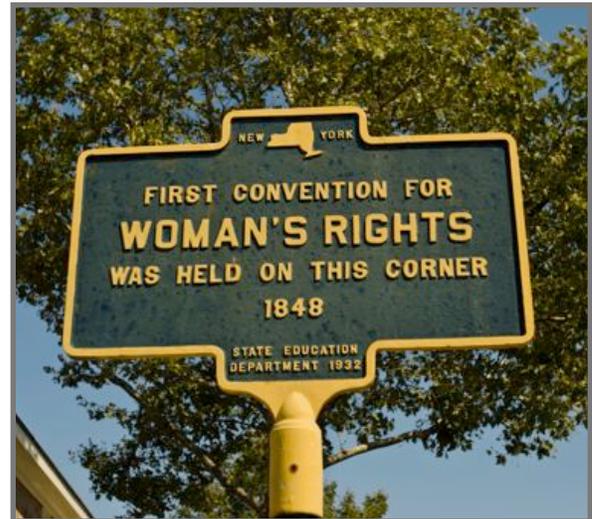
Downtown Description - Provide an overview of the downtown and summarize the rationale behind nominating this downtown for a Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) award:

#### **Overview:**

Historically, Seneca Falls is best known as the birthplace of Women’s Rights in the United States. As noted in the *Historic Seneca Falls 1997-98 Directory*,

*“By the mid-1800s, Seneca Falls was building a reputation as a center for social and religious reform. Abolition of slavery, temperance, and women's rights issues supported by many local residents. In July of 1848, local resident Elizabeth Cady Stanton along with others convened the first Women's Rights Convention. The Women's Rights National Historical Park, and the National Women's Hall of Fame are lasting legacies of this landmark event.”*

The Women’s Rights Convention convened in Seneca Falls in 1848 was the start of a long journey. It took until 1917 for New York State to grant women the right to vote, an event that marked the tipping point for the Nation. Three years later, in 1920, the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, granting women the right to vote throughout the United States. The long journey that was started in Seneca Falls in 1848 by a handful of courageous women had finally been completed. The historic impact of this movement is, and will always be the legacy of Seneca Falls. Thus it is fitting that the Women’s Suffrage movement will serve as the centerpiece of the Seneca Falls DRI proposal.



New York State Historic marker.

Beyond this signature accomplishment, Seneca Falls has an extremely rich history. Like many other towns in the Finger Lakes, Seneca Falls was built near a body of water. It lies alongside the Seneca River which flows between Seneca and Cayuga Lakes, the two largest lakes in the Finger Lakes region. The

falls for which the town is named was a series of cataracts on the Seneca River. These major bodies of water were important natural assets that aided Seneca Falls' growth and prosperity. Today they are a key asset to the Town's future prosperity.

Economic development has always been an important priority for Seneca Falls. Our first major initiative was the Seneca Lock Navigation Company, which predated the Erie Canal. By 1818, New York State had created the Cayuga-Seneca Canal along the River, connecting the two named lakes. From industry to banking, from agriculture to transportation, Seneca Falls has always found ways to succeed through innovative private-public partnerships.

As also noted in the *Historic Seneca Falls 1997-98 Directory*,

*“The rapids of the Seneca River attracted businesses that used the water power to develop mills, distilleries, tanneries, and factories of all types, such as the Seneca Knitting Mills...by 1828, the Cayuga-Seneca Canal was linked to the Great Erie Canal. The manufacture of pumps has been a large part of Seneca Falls' history since the early 1800s. Gould Pumps, Inc. remains a major local industry.”*



The Cayuga-Seneca Canal in downtown Seneca Falls.

Downtown currently stretches along the original path of the Seneca River (now the Cayuga-Seneca Canal) and historic Routes 5 & 20 (aka Fall Street and Cayuga Street in Seneca Falls). It is within this well-defined area - more than 30 blocks of homes, businesses and historic sites - for which we would use the Downtown Revitalization Initiative award. A DRI award will transform our town and this area of the Finger Lakes region into a showcase of tourism, industry and economic growth in New York State.

### **Rationale for our DRI proposal:**

The timing of Governor Cuomo's Downtown Revitalization Initiative coincides perfectly with opportunities now available to Seneca Falls. Foremost among these is *del Lago Resort and Casino*, a \$440 million facility currently under construction and slated to open in February 2017. This destination resort, located just 6 miles northwest of downtown Seneca Falls, will create over 1,800 permanent jobs. Employees from *del Lago* will need nearby housing, services, shopping and schools for their children. Seneca Falls will leverage a DRI grant with the opportunities presented by *del Lago* to create a vibrant downtown where people will want to live, work, shop and raise their families.

In addition to *del Lago* employees, the estimated 3.4 million visitors coming to *del Lago* each year (over 9,300 people each day) will also seek out places to stay, shop and experience the Finger Lakes. Using the DRI grant and other funding, we will draw these visitors, along with thousands of other tourists, to Seneca Falls, to explore their heritage at the home of the Women’s Rights Movement.

Seneca Falls’ central location in the heart of the beautiful Finger Lakes, making it the perfect central nexus for *del Lago* visitors and other tourists to explore the entire Finger Lakes region. The legacy of the



*An artist’s concept of del Lago Resort and Casino (from the del Lago website).*

region includes a rich history of; the Women’s Suffrage Movement; the Abolition Movement; the Underground Railroad; the Mormon Church; and U.S. Gran Prix racing. Historic figures who lived in the region include Frederick Douglas, Susan B. Antony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Amelia Bloomer and Harriett Tubman. The region also includes world class festivals, entertainment, dining, state and national parks, game reserves, and growing wine, beer, spirits and cheese industries, all within about a fifty-mile radius from Seneca Falls. Within an hour’s drive from Seneca Falls , a visitor can experience all that Syracuse, Rochester and Ithaca have to offer while remaining centrally located in the heart of the Finger Lakes..

Any successful downtown revitalization effort requires a small group of tireless “champions” to lead the revitalization activity. Without enthusiastic leadership, the needed strategies and resources will not materialize no matter the geographic size of the downtown. In Seneca Falls this leadership is vested in the Seneca Falls Development Corporation (the “SFDC”), which over the last year has been reenergized through a reorganization of it Board of Directors to include business people with the passion required to lead, rebuild and revitalize Seneca Falls by building on its heritage as the birthplace of Women’s Rights in the United States. The SFDC already has a written strategic plan for Seneca Falls and over the past 18 months has held meetings with members on the community to gather feedback on the plan and solicit volunteers to support SFDC with revision and implementation of the strategic plan. As a result of this preparatory effort, the Seneca Falls Town Council authorized the Seneca Falls Development Corporation

to take the lead for Seneca Falls in submitting this DRI proposal to the Finger Lakes Region Economic Council.

A \$10 million DRI investment in Seneca Falls will truly transform the downtown district of Seneca Falls and the surrounding region. In addition, a DRI award to Seneca Falls will have substantial leverage far beyond its own DRI district: the revitalization of downtown Seneca Falls will have a major positive impact throughout the Finger Lakes region.

### **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.*

Figure 1 illustrates the well-defined boundaries of the proposed DRI Downtown Development District (the "DRI District") for Seneca Falls. The DRI District is a subset of, and is contained entirely with the Seneca Falls National Register Historic District (NRHD), which was designated in 1991 in honor of the Women's Rights Convention and Movement. The proposed DRI District is outlined in yellow on the map



A canal boat on Van Cleef Lake passing by Trinity Episcopal Church in Seneca Falls.

in Figure 1 and is overlaid on the existing HRHD. Note that the HRHD contains more than 200 buildings listed as “contributing” (i.e., historically significant) to the NRHD. The purely residential areas of the HRHD at its northern and western extremities have been excluded from the DRI District. The DRI District has been designed to include 100% of the central business district as well as areas adjacent to the canal and historic Van Cleef Lake that have the potential for both commercial and recreational development.

Besides the central business district, this area includes over a half mile of the Cayuga-Seneca Canal (which flows directly into historic Van Cleef Lake), the existing Women’s Hall of Fame, the future Women’s Hall of Fame, the Women’s National Park, the Gould Hotel, the homes of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Emilia Bloomer, the Seneca Museum of Waterways and Industry, the Seneca Falls Recreation Center and the pair of high lift locks (49 feet of total lift) on the Cayuga-Seneca Canal. Van Cleef Lake, and the picturesque Trinity Church, on its northern shore, are two of the most scenic and photographed spots along any waterway in New York State. When the renovations of the future Women’s Hall of Fame (The Center for Great Women) are completed it will likely become the third of the most scenic and photographed spots on New York waterways.

Seneca Falls’ DRI District has significant undeveloped waterfront that is prime for development. Whether it be the back of the Fall Street storefronts, the walking trails along the canal and Van Cleef Lake, or the undeveloped parcel next to the future Women’s Hall of Fame, there is tremendous untapped opportunity for economic development.

Most of the proposed DRI District lies within a few blocks of our defining transportation corridors: The Seneca River (i.e., the Cayuga-Seneca Canal) and Routes 5 & 20. Exit 41 on the New York State Thruway is only 6 miles from the DRI District, providing quick and easy access for visitors to the town.

- 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 size-able existing, or increasing, population within easy reach for whom this would be the primary downtown.*

**Size:** Our proposed DRI District extends over half a mile along the Routes 5 & 20 corridor, paralleled by a half mile of the Cayuga-Seneca Canal and Van Cleef Lake. The District encompasses all of the Town’s central business district and over 30 blocks of homes, businesses and historic properties. Specifically, the Seneca Falls downtown is one of the largest intact Victorian infrastructures in the Finger Lakes, as evidenced by its designation as a National Register Historic District. The entirety of the proposed Seneca Falls DRI District is a very walkable venue for both its residents and visitors to the town.

**Population:** Unlike any other community in the Finger Lakes, Seneca Falls will be able to leverage the Downtown Revitalization Initiative to dramatically increase both its permanent and visitor populations due to the following ongoing and imminent economic opportunities:



*del Lago*: Beginning in early 2017, *del Lago Resort and Casino* will employ 1,800 people and bring in an average of 9,300 visitors each day. These employees will need a wide range of housing, and with Seneca Falls being only 6 miles away, it will become a prime location to attract this new



Construction of *del Lago Resort and Casino* is well underway (from the *del Lago* website).

population. Those with or planning families will be drawn to the Town due to its quality of life and the quality of its school system. Other considerations for these future residents of Seneca Falls include the variety of stores, restaurants, personal services, recreational resources and other lifestyle amenities either in or nearby Seneca Falls.

While the majority of *del Lago* visitors will be spending most of their time at the casino, many will be exploring the area for additional entertainment, shopping, dining and recreational opportunities. The historic depth of Seneca Falls and its geographic position as a nexus to the numerous other tourist attractions in the central Finger Lakes region should provide an edge in attracting *del Lago* visitors to the Town and its surrounding regions.



A view of the historic Mill, the Cayuga-Seneca Canal and downtown Seneca Falls at night.

**The Center for Great Women (National Women’s Hall of Fame):** As previously referenced Seneca Falls is the home of Women’s Rights. In 2017 the National Women’s Hall of Fame will relocate from its current facility on Fall Street (the “Main Street” of Seneca Falls ) to the renovated historic Seneca Knitting Mill located on the south side of the Cayuga-Seneca Canal. The Mill will become the permanent home of the Women’s Hall of Fame and will provide the space and facilities for significantly expanded exhibits and other activities that will be incorporated into this Center for Great Women. Renovation of the Mill has been made possible due to the support from the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council. Now that renovations of the Mill are underway, Seneca Falls has the potential to become a world class destination, capable of attracting visitor populations that would be unimaginable only a few years ago.

**The Central Finger Lakes Wine Trails:** Seneca Falls is an ideal location to either start or finish a tour of the wineries that encircle nearby Cayuga and Seneca Lakes. For example, The Cayuga Lake Wine Trail is the first organized and longest running Wine Trail in the Country. Wines along this trail have earned over 6,000 national and international medals over the years including New York States prestigious Governor’s Cup Award. The trail includes rolling vineyards and breathtaking views of Cayuga Lake. The wine tasting along the Lake is complemented by distilleries, cideries, brewery and locally made cheeses. Similar experiences can be found on the Seneca Lake Wine Trail that encircles Seneca Lake. The northern end of the Cayuga Wine trail is located just six minutes from downtown Seneca Falls. The Seneca Lake trail is just over 13 miles from the center of town.

**Museums, Special Places and Special Events:** Seneca Falls is the home to several museums and special events. In addition to the National Women’s Hall of Fame, within the proposed DRI District a tourist can easily walk to the Seneca Falls Historical Society (<http://sfhistoricalsociety.org>), The Seneca Museum of Waterways & Industry (<http://senecamuseum.com>), and The Seneca Falls It’s A Wonderful Life Museum (<https://www.wonderfullifemuseum.com>), the homes of Elizabeth Cady Stanton (<https://www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/elizabeth-cady-stanton-house.htm>) and Amelia Bloomer (<https://www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/amelia-bloomer.htm>) and the highest lift canal locks in New York State.

Approximately 20 other museums are located within a 30 minute drive from the center of Town.

Seneca Falls is the host to several unique special events. These include The National Women’s Hall of Fame induction of Great Women held over a Fall weekend every other year. The next induction will occur in 2017, which is also the 100th anniversary of women obtaining the right to vote in New York.

The 2017 induction will include special events to highlight New York State's pivotal role in moving the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution toward its ultimate ratification. high

The It's a Wonderful Life Festival weekend in December of each year. The inspiration for the event dates back to Frank Capra's visit to Seneca Falls in the mid-1940 and scenes from the movie depicting Bedford Falls seem to indicate that Capra sprinkled vignettes of his Seneca Falls trip into the movie. Every year this event draws approximately 8,000 visitors to Seneca Falls and features visits from some of the younger cast members from the film and a 5K race that routinely attracts 3,500 or more runners.



[The home of Elizabeth Cady Stanton on Washington Street in Seneca Falls.](#)

Initiated for the first time this year was the Women's Right to Run 19K & 5K, a fund raiser for the National Women's Hall of Fame held over Mother's Day Weekend. This first time event, which attracted 1,000 runners, will be expanded to include an additional 19K from Geneva to Seneca Falls, a half marathon from Auburn to Seneca Falls and a 5K from Waterloo to Seneca Falls, all converging to a finish in Seneca Falls at The Center for Great Women. These events are expected to attract more than 4,000 runners and their families to Seneca Falls.

In September 2017, the World Canals Festival will be hosted by Syracuse, and one of the corresponding events will be held in Seneca Falls. This prestigious Festival is held at various locations throughout the world and attracts approximately 500 delegates and their families.



Seneca Falls is prepared to win a Downtown Revitalization Initiative award and has the leadership and can project population growth that will drive the transformation of its downtown DRI District. It also has the resources and strategies common to successful downtown revitalization efforts across the U.S. These include:

- Retail, restaurants and mixed-use buildings;
- Personal services, a medical clinic and senior housing;
- High tech manufacturing (ITT Goulds Pumps, Bonadent, and possibly 5 Star Medical Corp., among others);
- Historic tourism opportunities;
- Nearby higher education institutions (New York Chiropractic College, Hobart and William Smith Colleges and The Finger Lakes and Cayuga Community Colleges);
- Abundant natural resources and facilities (the Finger Lakes, Cayuga Lake State Park, Taughannock Park, Watkins Glen State Park, the Watkins Glen International Speedway, the Finger Lakes National Forest, the Montezuma Wildlife Reserve, Cayuga and Seneca Lakes and dozens of additional local, state and national parks); and
- Proximity to the New York State Thruway (Interstate Route 90).



The Cayuga-Seneca Canal, through its locks that link it to the Erie Canal, ultimately provides boat access from Seneca Falls to waterways around the world.

Transformation of the Seneca Falls downtown DRI District will be a powerful drawing card to attract new residents to the Town. The overall quality of life and public schools, complemented by the many lifestyle amenities listed above, are likely to make Seneca Falls the next Canandaigua or Skaneateles of the Finger Lakes. Once this is recognized the Town will become an attractive place to live not only for *del Lago* employees, but also commuters from nearby cities including Rochester and Syracuse.

We are confident that no other community in the Finger Lakes region has the combination of three key population drivers - The National Women's Hall of Fame, *del Lago Resort and Casino*, and access to world class wineries and numerous other tourist attractions which already exist in or near Seneca Falls. Furthermore, there are a number of opportunities that will be addressed in this proposal that will begin having a substantial impact in 2017, concurrent with the start of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding. Consequently, Seneca Falls will be positioned to immediately begin leveraging a New York State DRI investment.

**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.*

Seneca Falls has used strategic investments in its downtown since our founding. Over the past 40 years, these investment have helped to somewhat alleviate the decline brought about by economic upheaval in our region. The DRI grant will support our endeavor to completely revitalize our downtown and support revival in the surrounding region.

Between 2000 and 2014, more than \$80 million has been invested in the proposed Seneca Falls DRI District and its adjacent neighborhoods. While the Town still has funding gaps that must be filled to meet its plans, these prior investments created a foundation upon which DRI funding can effectively build and leverage other funding sources. The table on the following page provides an approximate summary of the major investments that have occurred over this 15 year period.

Although not in the town of Seneca Falls, the \$440 million investment in the nearby *del Lago Resort and Casino*, will have significant impact on Seneca Falls and other towns in the region. Located 6 miles from downtown Seneca Falls will be the \$440 million dollar project, *del Lago Resort and Casino*. This tourist magnet will have a significant impact on Seneca Falls with its estimated 3.4 million visitors per year. *Del Lago Resort and Casino* has numerous initiatives to increase tourism into its neighboring towns as well as regularly feature local vendors and artisans in its restaurants and Savor New York Shopping Arena. They will also host special interest and day trips from the resort so their 9,300 guests per day can enjoy the Finger Lakes in its entirety.

The major projects noted below include investments of \$86.3 million dollars total. Of those investment figures, \$63.9 million (or 74% of the total) was from private investments. This illustrates that Seneca Falls is both poised and ready for public investments yet still holds significance for private investors.

**Table of Seneca Falls Strategic Investments from 2000 to 2014**

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Amount (millions of dollars)</u>
2011 - 2012	BonaDent Laboratories	11.0
2013	Café XIX	0.5
2013	Generations Bank Headquarters	5.0
2009	The Gould Hotel	6.0
2013	ITT Goulds Pumps	30.0
2010 - 2013	Seneca Falls Central School District	19.2
2014 - 2015	Seneca Falls Central School District	1.4
2014	National Women’s Hall of Fame	6.0
2011	Parker’s Restaurant	1.2
2015	Sauder’s Store	4.0
2006	Seneca Falls Public Library	2.0

Prior to the 2000 to 2014 timeframe Seneca Falls’ downtown’s designation as a National Register Historic District (1991) enabled Seneca Falls to secure more than \$20 million in grants and investments. We capitalized on these to save historic buildings, build a National Park and maintain the integrity of 200+ historically significant structures in our downtown.

While often overlooked in economic development analyses, private philanthropy can provide investments that transform entire communities. The people of Seneca Falls have donated millions of dollars over the years to:

- build and endow every historic church in downtown;
- create and fund four attractive local museums;
- support education, from one-room schools to the founding of Eisenhower College (1965). This campus is now home to New York Chiropractic College;
- transform historic buildings in order to house nonprofits (National Women’s Hall of Fame, House of Concern, Women’s Studies Center, Red Cross and others);
- build two Seneca Falls libraries; and - construct and operate the former Seneca Falls Hospital.

**Future Investments:** The National Women’s Hall of Fame supports our efforts to obtain the DRI. In just a few weeks, the Hall will embark on the next phase of its rehabilitation and repurposing of the former Seneca Falls Knitting Mill. The Mill will become the Hall’s new home and the Center for Great Women. The current \$6 million phase will be completed by mid-2017.



George Tilton, owner of Five Star Medical Corporation, has a small office in Seneca Falls, and the SFDC is working with George to optimistically make Seneca Falls the permanent location for his medical manufacturing and training facilities. Five Star Medical has the potential to become one of the area's largest manufacturing facilities.

We recently attracted several new businesses to our downtown district: a Mexican restaurant is in the process of opening on Fall Street; a micro-brewery is actively seeking a downtown location for its tasting room; TangoSquared, a "branding" company has leased office space above a storefront; the local bank has begun a \$1.2 million renovation of its Seneca Falls Office and continues to add employees to its headquarters which opened in 2013 (a \$5 million project); and an Internal Medical Specialist recently relocated to Seneca Falls.

Mixed-use retail is an important element of downtown Seneca Falls; therefore the DRI funding will add further integral elements to compliment the work that had begun when Seneca Falls received \$460,000 in the Main Street America Grant in 2010-2011. The Seneca Falls Town Council has already agreed to seek out additional Main Street America grants in 2016. These funds, both past and present are used to attract additional street-level retail stores to occupy underutilized storefronts along the Fall Street (i.e. "Main Street") business district which are immediately available for renovation and occupancy. Simultaneously upper floors will be renovated to form apartments and office space.

We have also experienced a healthy demand and lengthy wait-list for our moderate to upper level apartments. We are confident that the current Stephanie Court Apartments at Wescott Rule and Renovations to historic Trinity church into apartments (27 in total) will result in a stable rental market.

The DRI will continue to promote the fostering of new projects in the areas of tourism, manufacturing, and housing - construction of new houses and renovations of housing stock. Increased foot traffic in the business district due to the new shops, apartments and offices will support the objective of the DRI.

We believe that this new interest in our downtown is a representation of what is to come: an exciting diversity of services, restaurants, activities, history, and a location like no other!

**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.*

The aforementioned:

- \$440 million dollar *del Lago Resort and Casino* project;
- expansion ITT Goulds Pumps and Generation's Bank;
- potential home of Five Star Medical Manufacturing Corp; and
- anticipated new restaurants, microbrewery, retail services, office space and medical services,

will create over 2,000 jobs in or near the delineated downtown area. The career paths that are being created are a diverse mix of sustainable occupations, which will provide wages above the area's average compensation and benefits.



Seneca Falls will continue to build on our success and partnerships by:

- Creating a strong incentive program for service business to locate their offices in our downtown district;
- Providing for diversified housing within our downtown;
- Developing vacant waterfront property into a yet-to-be determined mixture of housing, retail, entertainment venues, and additional transient boating amenities;
- Placing additional historical placards, monuments, and statues throughout the district commemorating Seneca Falls' position as the Home of Women's Rights and providing visitors with a walking historical tour;
- Connecting the Cayuga-Seneca Canal Trail to provide a continuous route from Geneva through Seneca Falls, which presently passes through historic Waterloo, the Birthplace of Memorial Day; and
- Developing a support program to provide current downtown businesses with assistance for expansion or remodeling opportunities.

Investments in rebuilding downtown Seneca Falls will only be successful if the results are sustainable. To do this, we must make sure the retail businesses we attract can compete successfully in this new, highly competitive world. One service we will be proposing under this project is a partnership with the local training organizations (Workforce Development, BOCES, and FLCC) to provide both business training to the store owners and sales and customer service training to their employees. While the details of this program still need to be developed, one thought is to have the program pay for the tuition as one of the incentives offered to both existing and new retail businesses.

This anticipated projection in growth is very reasonable given the increase in visitors that are expected to visit *del Lago Resort and Casino* and the newly renovated Center for Great Women (Women's Hall of Fame). Seneca Falls is well positioned to transform its central business district into one of the most robust combination of ***work, live, learn and play*** environments in the Finger Lakes

**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.*

Downtown Seneca Falls is both quiet and stunning; a combination apparent to both longtime residents and first-time visitors. Its buildings are historic, some serving as silent witnesses to the first Women's Rights Convention in 1848. Of the 200+ structures within our defined downtown, the majority are multi-story buildings being utilized for a mixed use of retail, markets, museums, tourism sites, service providers and housing. The DRI Grant will greatly increase the usage and occupancy of these downtown buildings.

Apartments in our district accommodate upper, moderate, and low income families. Regardless of the types of apartments made available, there is always a waiting list. The soon to be completed Stephanie



Court at Wescott Rule has a waiting list. In addition existing complexes, such as the Johnson Home, which is fully occupied also has a waiting list. There is interest in several properties in our district for affordable housing and are the target of the soon to be written Main Street Grant.

Locally, rent is typically \$550 to \$1,500 per month, depending upon amenities. The average cost of a home within our district is \$80,000, with a range of \$60,000-\$350,000. Rental assistance and low cost mortgage programs are available to assist families in making these choices affordable. Some of Seneca Falls' highest end housing consists of the stately homes and mansions on Cayuga and State Streets. The oldest of these are in the Colonial and Greek Revival style. Most of the more modern yet historic commercial and residential structures fall into the Italianate, Second Empire and Queen Anne styles.

Our downtown has convenience stores, health food stores and a seasonal farmers market. We have three "chain" markets located about three miles west of downtown, along with the previously mentioned Sauder's Market (Sec. 4). Within our district is the county's only food pantry. Should we secure a DRI grant, we are considering the expansion of the food pantry offerings, enhancing the downtown health food store, and further developing the Farmer's Market.

Walkers, joggers, and bicyclists have plenty of paths and trails to explore. The 10 mile walking path connecting Seneca and Cayuga Lakes (Cayuga-Seneca Canal Trail) which is almost complete, except for a small section in our downtown. One project within our DRI proposal would be completing this trail. In addition, we are considering establishing a walking trail around Van Cleef Lake, which would connect to the Cayuga-Seneca Canal Trail. Seneca Falls has several downtown parks, including People's Park where concerts and the Farmers Market are held each week in the summer. The former Mynderse Academy site is also on a large park with an attractive fountain and various monuments.

The two sides of downtown over the canal are connected by bridges, but they attract little foot traffic. One is "Bailey Bridge" thought to be the inspiration for the movie *It's A Wonderful Life*. The completion of the Center For Great Women on the south side of the canal coupled with additional developments will encourage exploration by tourists and residents.

**Of Special Note:** There are three significant sites in our downtown district which deserve special notice. The first is the largest structure on the south side of downtown, the former Seneca Knitting Mill Complex. Today, thanks to FLREDC support and millions of dollars in private contributions, this will soon become the expansive new home of the National Women's Hall of Fame. This project will be the anchor to our redevelopment strategies on the south side of downtown, should Seneca Falls receive the DRI grant.

Our second gem is widely considered to be the most picturesque spot in the Finger Lakes. Van Cleef Lake is possibly the Finger Lakes' most photographed image (other than our many waterfalls). The Lake resulted from the intentional flooding on a section of the town known as "the Flats" in 1916 by New York State, to enlarge the Barge Canal. More than 110 industrial buildings and 60 are underwater, resulting in a significant underwater historical site. The Flats are memorialized in the *Seneca Waterways Museum*, a few blocks to the west in the heart of downtown.



Overlooking Van Cleef Lake is our third jewel, the historic Trinity Episcopal Church. Quoting from Seneca County Historian Walter Gable, “the church was literally built upon a rock as blasting excavations had to be made for its foundation, with walls of blue limestone and appointed throughout with Onondaga limestone...Trinity boasts several beautiful stained glass windows including three done by the famed Tiffany Glass Company of New York City. A favorite of Trinity visitors and parishioners alike is [non-Tiffany] ‘Sermon on the Mount’ window containing nine life-size figures.”

- 6) **Policies to Enhance the Quality of Life.** *Identify the properties or characteristics the downtown possesses that contribute or could contribute, if enhanced, to the attractiveness and livability of the downtown. Consider, for example, the presence of developable mixed-use spaces, housing at different levels of affordability and type, healthy and affordable food markets, walkability and bikeability, and public parks and gathering spaces.*

The planning process for this grant began a decade ago in 2006. At that time Seneca Falls contracted with Camoin Associates of Saratoga Springs to “*prepare a plan to guide the community in pro-actively pursuing economic development in keeping with its character and small-town feel.*” The resulting report (finished in 2007) consists of two parts: the **Strategic Plan for Economic Development** and the **Commercial Revitalization Plan**.

In line with this plan, the Seneca Fall Development Corporation (SFDC) was formed and is the lead agency for this grant. While not the same as a land bank, the SFDC, in accordance with its by-laws, is able to acquire, improve, and sell real property independent of our sponsoring municipality. In addition, the SFDC can independently apply for funding to accomplish its objectives.

The plan also suggested that the village and town merge, which was accomplished in 2010. As a follow-up to the merger, the town of Seneca Falls adopted a modern zoning code in October of 2013, which encompasses property development, parking, and usage. The town has also created an asset purchase plan after a formal review of all of its assets. Additionally, the town had to merge and reconcile the former village and town laws into a single entity.

The Town of Seneca Falls does not have a Downtown Manager, however the Seneca Falls Business Association (SFBA) was formed by the downtown businesses to advocate on behalf of merchants, organize downtown events, promote diverse business opportunities, and offer ideas for further development.

The DRI Grant could potentially fund a Seneca Falls Business Improvement District which would preserve, revitalize, and market the downtown district in concert with the SFBA.

Seneca Falls lies on the eastern end of a 10 mile corridor running to Geneva. We have low-cost, reliable public transportation via the Rochester Transit Service, instituted 10 years ago. One possible focus of our DRI grant will be working in tandem with Seneca County to further develop the RTS Transportation program to include new stops such as: incoming employers, extending its reach and increasing its frequency.

**7) Poverty Reduction.** *The FLREDC has identified reduction of poverty as a primary goal of its regional economic development strategy. Please identify if and how the proposed revitalization efforts would provide an opportunity to support this strategy.*

The Seneca Falls School District's statistics that show 50% of our families qualify for the free and reduced lunch program. While one may think that poverty is less obvious in small towns, it is still an epidemic. Small homes and trailers in "projects" inhabit a good portion of our landscape, and many single-family homes have been abandoned or fallen into disrepair yet are still inhabited in poor condition. Ironically, just a few streets away, there are still stately mansions that remind us of better economic times.

The Seneca Falls' School District data shows that their free and reduced lunch population went from 11% in 1993 to just over 50% in 2016, and those figures continue to rise. In addition, we now have several low-income apartment complexes, albeit with good initial intentions, which draw unscrupulous outsiders generating drug trafficking and other corrupt behaviors. Sadly, poverty is a big part of our daily lives in Seneca Falls. While our good hearted "small-town" schools and programs assist with feeding, clothing, and other assistance programs, these are only putting band-aids on the wounds and not solving the root of the disease. Education, training, and career paths are required to end poverty, and this DRI grant will assist Seneca Falls in achieving our goal of significantly decreasing our population living in poverty by providing our residents the tools needed to end this cycle.

At the same time that poverty is increasing, Seneca County has had the second highest population growth in the region: Seneca County's population grew by 4.6% from 2000 to 2014, a greater increase than the state (4.1%) and region (1.6%). (<http://www.actrochester.org/Seneca>). Unlike many other areas, Seneca County continues to see growth in its population numbers, which creates more rationale and motivation to invest in our downtown and our residents. Once *del Lago Resort and Casino* opens in February of 2017, we expect those numbers to substantially increase with its creation of 1,800 permanent jobs and 3.4 million visitors per year as well.

While Seneca Falls does not have a large racially diverse population, poverty is very much a problem across all ethnicities and cultures. As noted by [www.ruralhome.org](http://www.ruralhome.org) (2012), "Small-town poverty rates generally follow the same trend as national rates...these rates are still stubbornly high for certain populations in rural America – namely minorities and children. In fact, rural minorities consistently have higher poverty rates compared to minorities nationally. Still, it must be remembered that the vast majority of the rural/small-town poor are white."

In rural areas, a lack of transportation options also plays a big role in employment (or a lack thereof). Owning or leasing a vehicle is almost a requirement in rural settings such as Seneca Falls, but not all families can afford that luxury.

With the above points in mind, we will use the DRI funding to reduce poverty by employing the following approach:



- Assist our residents in attaining sustainable jobs and career paths aimed at the unemployed and under-employed;
- Provide on-going training opportunities for those persons not yet qualified for these jobs and to enhance the skills of those who are underemployed by partnering with Seneca County Workforce Development, Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES, and Finger Lakes Community College (see letters of support from these organizations attached to our application).
- Underwrite and assist support systems, particularly transportation and child care required for full-time employment.
- Work with Seneca County in expanding its public transportation system:  
<http://www.myrts.com/Seneca/Schedules>
- Assist families with purchasing or leasing vehicles through credit improvement programs and low interest loan programs sponsored by the DRI. Our local bank has created a program that provides low-cost auto loans from which half of the interest from the loans is set aside in a reserve to offset losses (loans not repaid) and to fund the program in the future. We anticipate expanding this model through additional bank participation and improved marketing. This would support those seeking downtown jobs as well as those wishing to work at *del Lago*, approximately six miles away.
- Assist families with purchasing and/or making improvements to their homes with low interest housing and home equity loans. Habitat for Humanity of Seneca County has successfully built or renovated 16 projects and has five more underway this year. Three of Habitat's past projects were something of a joint venture with a local bank through which the bank funded the property acquisition and renovation. Habitat took applications to find partner families to work along side volunteers and skilled laborers on the homes. The families leased the finished homes from Habitat and ultimately purchased the homes via mortgages provided by the bank. We envision using a portion of the DRI proceeds to further this program.

A DRI grant awarded to Seneca Falls will not only support this plan of transforming its downtown into a robust center of retail, restaurants, tourism, and services, but also our allow our residents to pull themselves out of destitution and hardship through their own hard work. On-going training programs available through partnerships with Seneca County Workforce Development, BOCES, our local school district, and FLCC will allow local residents to develop sustainable jobs and career paths and thus ending the poverty cycle.

**8) 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 following is an overview of the core team and its strategic partners who will help develop and implement the DRI.

The Seneca Falls Town Board has assigned responsibility for developing the proposal and managing the grant to the Seneca Falls Development Corporation. A resolution in support of our DRI efforts is attached. (It should be noted that the people of Seneca Falls recently took the long-sighted step of combining their Village and Town, thus dissolving the Village government).

**Lead Agency:** Seneca Falls Development Corporation (SFDC) is a Not-for-Profit Local Development Corporation was founded in 2007 to “*plan and implement programs, projects and activities designed to create or stimulate economic and community development in the Town of Seneca Falls, New York.*” It is governed by a five-member board that additionally includes two members of the Town Board. This entity will be the fiscal agent, and will take responsibility for convening the DRI Planning Committee and overseeing the plan’s development and implementation.

The SFDC is responsible for public outreach activities. Meetings are held monthly, and special meetings were convened on April 22 and May 20 and June 8 of this year. Fifty local leaders attended a special meeting on April 22nd to view a presentation, learn about the DRI and discuss economic development plans for Seneca Falls. This generated many of the ideas incorporated into this plan. In addition, two groups (one to review and update the 2007 strategic plan, one to provide hands-on assistance for projects) have been created to keep our momentum going.

**Local Support:** There has been a tremendous outpouring of support for the Seneca Falls’ DRI proposal. We have received letters of support from our local New York State elected representatives, the Seneca Falls Town Board, numerous Seneca Falls retail business owners, the Seneca Falls Downtown Association, Generations Bank, County of Seneca – Division of Human Services’ Deputy Commissioner and its Deputy, the Seneca County Chamber of Commerce, The National Women’s Hall of Fame, the Seneca Falls Visitor Center, the Seneca Falls Central School District, the Wayne-Finger Lakes Board of Cooperative Educational Services and last, but certainly not least, *Del Lago Resort and Casino*. In total, 35 support letters are attached to Section 9 of this proposal.

Senator Michael Nozzolio and Assemblyman Brian Kolb have both written letters of support, which are attached. Seneca Falls is Senator Nozzolio’s hometown and the location of his district office, so we have the Senator’s utmost level of support.

In the process of making this proposal, members of the DRI grant writing team met with almost thirty retail store owners from the Seneca Falls Business Association (SFBA) to seek their input and support for this proposal. Numerous of their Letters of Support are attached.

We also have the support of the Seneca Falls Business Association (SFBA), ITT Gould’s Pumps, Bonadent, the National Women’s Hall of Fame, The Seneca Waterways and Industry Museum, *del Lago Resort and Casino*, Generations Bank, the historic Gould Hotel and many other local businesses.

Local government support has come through the Seneca County Industrial Development Agency, providing PILOT agreements, exemptions from local sales taxes and other benefits. The IDA assisted greatly in the two of the largest private investments in downtown over the last two decades. At a time when manufacturers abandoned the Northeast, ITT Goulds invested millions of dollars to upgrade its manufacturing site on Fall Street, and added a new site just outside of downtown. Generations Bank, a mainstay here for over 150 years, renovated and expanded a former supermarket into its regional corporate headquarters. These two projects kept high demand, high wage jobs in Seneca Falls

In addition, we have already formed partnerships with numerous organizations who will assist us with our educational and training strategies (as also discussed under the Poverty Section). These organizations include the Seneca Falls Central School District, Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES, Seneca County Workforce Development, Finger Lakes Community College (FLCC), and the New York Chiropractic College (NYCC). It is our position that if these organizations work in tandem to support specific career paths, we can produce a new generation of residents who are college and/or career ready thus providing a more self-sustaining population to break the poverty cycle. Most of these organizations are also going to assist us in training our unemployed and under-employed adults to create a healthier and more self-sufficient population of residents.

*Del Lago Resort and Casino* has numerous initiatives to increase tourism into its neighboring towns as well as regularly feature local vendors and artisans in its restaurants and Savor New York Shopping Arena. They will also host special interest and day trips from the resort so their 9,300 guests per day can enjoy the Finger Lakes region in its entirety. Del Lago Resort and Casino's Community Outreach Coordinator sits on the SFDC's Board in support of Seneca Falls' efforts to develop its downtown and increase tourism. : Members of the DRI grant writing team met with almost thirty retail store owners from the Seneca Falls Business Association (SFBA) to seek their input and support for this proposal.

**In Closing:**

Seneca Falls, located in the heart of the Finger Lakes between Seneca and Cayuga Lakes, has historical and physical assets that are unrivaled anywhere else in the region. Its place in history was secured by courageous women who, in 1848, opened a discussion and began a movement that ultimately resulted in passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that gave women the right to vote. There can be no doubt - Seneca Falls is the birthplace of Women's Rights in the United States.

Largely because of this fact, over the past five years, Seneca Falls has drawn the attention of many notable individuals through the National Women's Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and the National Women's Rights Historical Park. President Barack Obama and First Lady Michele Obama, Former Senator and Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton, First Lady Rosalyn Carter, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi are just a few of the notable visitors Seneca Falls. Developing programs to celebrate the attainment of the Sentiments expressed in 1848 will only increase Seneca Falls' notoriety - it will draw additional investment to the community and the Finger Lakes region.

The Town has the physical assets required to support a Downtown Revitalization Initiative award. These include a National Register Historic District designation in honor of the Women's Rights Convention and Movement, which functions to preserve one of the largest intact Victorian infrastructures in the Finger Lakes. Water is another key asset of the Town. The historic Cayuga-Seneca flows through the Town, leading into beautiful Van Cleef Lake. At the east end of Van Cleef Lake are the two highest lift canal locks in New York State. Trinity Church, located on the northwest shore of the Lake is one of the most photographed spots in New York. Finally, the Seneca Knitting Mill, soon to become the new home for the



National Women's Hall of Fame and The Center for Great Women will become a stunning structure in the Town symbolizing the Women's Suffrage Movement and Seneca Falls' role in that effort.

The opening of *del Lago Resort and Casino* in early 2017 will provide an enormous growth opportunity for Seneca Falls and other towns in the area. The influx of 1,800 *del Lago* employees will drive a need for quality housing and quality public schools throughout the region. Due to its proximity to *del Lago* and the quality of life in the Town, Seneca Falls will be an attractive location for a significant number of these employees to call home. In addition, the estimated 9,300 visitors coming to *del Lago* each day will provide enormous tourism opportunities for the surrounding towns. Again, Seneca Falls is well positioned to capitalize on this tourism opportunity.

Finally, Seneca Falls is well prepared for the opportunity and challenges associated with winning and executing a Downtown Revitalization Initiative award. The Seneca Falls Development Corporation was formed specifically to pursue, win and execute these type of opportunities. We trust that this proposal, and our presentation next week, will convince the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council that this is the case and that the Council will select Seneca Falls as its Finger Lakes Downtown Revitalization Initiative nominee.

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

Attached please find 35 Letters of Support as discussed under the Local Support heading.

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10. County of Seneca – Division of Human Services' Director
11. Del Lago Resort and Casino
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34. Wayne-Finger Lakes Board of Cooperative Educational Services
35. Women Made Products

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE SENECA FALLS DEVELOPMENT CORP. (SFDC) IN APPLYING FOR THE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE GRANT IN THE FINGER LAKES REGION AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (REDC) GRANTS**

**WHEREAS** the SFDC is operating in cooperation with the Seneca Falls Town Council as a subsidiary of the Seneca Falls Town Council, enabling the SFDC to be an entity qualified to make application for said grants; and

**WHEREAS** the Town Council has found that it is in the public interest to invest in the economic development and revitalization of its Historic Town of Seneca Falls; and

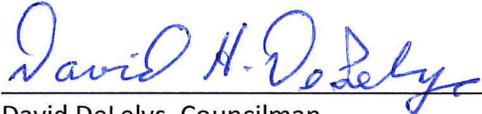
**WHEREAS** the Town Council has found that it is in the public interest to invest in the economic development and revitalization of its Historic Town of Seneca Falls; and

**WHEREAS** the Town Council has determined that the applications on behalf of the Town of Seneca Falls are in the public interest and for the benefit of the town, its inhabitants and businesses;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF SENECA FALLS, SENECA COUNTY, NEW YORK that:**

The Town of Seneca Falls hereby resolves to support the Seneca Falls Development Corporation (SFDC) to make applications to the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant and the Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region Grants to benefit the Town of Seneca Falls.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gregory P. Lazzaro, Town Supervisor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David DeLelys, Councilman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Vittorio Porretta, Councilman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Annette Lutz, Councilwoman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mary Sarratorj, Councilwoman

**ADOPTED ON JUNE 7, 2016**

June 2, 2016

Frank and Nereyda Blandon  
Avicollì's Italian Kitchen & NY Pizzeria  
170 Fall Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Joell Murney-Karsten  
Seneca Falls Development Corporation  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Dear Joell:

We have owned and operated Avicollì's since June 2012. Our chefs have over 20 years experience in Italian Cuisine. This allows us to offer unique authentic dishes.

Yesterday we were approached by a Seneca Falls Development Corporation representative. She explained that our business is within the boundaries of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative application for Seneca Falls.

We are located seven doors down from The Women's Rights National Historical Park. Increased tourism to the birthplace of women's rights – especially the Park would increase foot traffic and positively affect our sales. We look forward to the announcement about the grant recipients.

Sincerely,

Frank Blandon



Nereyda Blandon





June 09, 2016

Seneca Falls Development Corporation

Seneca Falls, NY 131348

Please know that Barrister's Bed & Breakfast is supporting the efforts and a proposal being submitted for the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative to transform downtown Seneca Falls into a "vibrant community where tomorrow's workforce will want to live, work and raise families".

Seneca Falls is an important piece of U.S. and New York. The women of Seneca Falls began to think about the issues such as the social, civil and religious conditions of women when they gathered at the village of Seneca Falls, in the Wesleyan Chapel in July, 1848. This foresight marked Seneca Falls as the birthplace of Women's Rights and brings 38,139 visitors to Seneca Falls last year (<https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/>). These visitors also shop, stay and dine in Seneca Falls.

Revitalizing the downtown area will attract the above visitors and many tens of thousands additional visitors to the area. The area can be focal point of both Women's history and women operated business.

Barrister's Bed and Breakfast is located on historic Cayuga Street in Seneca Falls and would benefit greatly to the additional visitors to our area. Many of our current visitors are new to Seneca Falls and thrilled to learn of its rich history.

For Seneca Falls to obtain the ten-million-dollar grant, it would help create a downtown that would feature shopping, historical walking tours and upscale dining opportunities. The downtown would be an attraction for businesses or individuals looking to relocate to the exciting and vibrant community.

Barrister's Bed & Breakfast ask for your careful and thoughtful consideration to the application by Seneca Falls for the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Please consider its rich heritage and the opportunity to showcase that heritage.

Regards,

Ken & Diane McConnell, Innkeepers  
Barrister's Bed & Breakfast  
56 Cayuga Street, Seneca Falls, NY 13148  
(315) 568-0145  
[innkeeper@sleepbarristers.com](mailto:innkeeper@sleepbarristers.com)



# BloomMultimedia

DESIGN, MARKETING, AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Abigail Hodde and I am sending this letter as a show of support to the Seneca Falls Development Corporation (SFDC) and the Seneca Falls Town Council as they pursue funding from New York State's Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

My husband and I own a small business called Bloom Multimedia, located in downtown Seneca Falls, where we assist other businesses in developing their online presence and company branding. As recent transplants to the Seneca Falls area, we've found it to be a diverse and beautiful community full of both homegrown businesses and new ideas - a community where our services can truly help other businesses thrive. Seneca Falls also has a rich history, including the women's rights and suffrage movements. This gives the town a unique blend of antique charm and modern innovation.

As a woman and small business owner, I am proud to live in an area with such an exciting history of women's advocacy and a strong future for women business owners. I feel that our area has a unique flavor that appeals to many people such as myself, and that it is a remarkable place to live and work. But I also believe that our town - and our business - could benefit from more traffic and tourism.

With increased funding, Seneca Falls-based businesses could afford better means of reaching out and engaging with the surrounding communities, making the services our business offers even more welcome and accessible. A vibrant, exciting downtown area would not only attract tourists and transplants (such as myself), but it would also truly benefit our business, giving us more exposure to potential clients and partners.

We thank you for investing in our town.

Sincerely,  
Abigail & Luke Hodde

Bloom Multimedia, LLC  
12 N. Park Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148  
[www.bloommultimedia.com](http://www.bloommultimedia.com)



**Brian M. Kolb**  
Assembly Minority Leader

THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

June 7, 2016

Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development  
400 Andrews Street  
Suite 300  
Rochester, NY 14604

Dear Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council members:

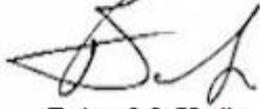
I write to support the Seneca Falls Development Corporation's proposal for the 2016 Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant. As the Assembly representative for the Seneca Falls region, I know firsthand how much hard work and planning has gone into this proposal and I believe this DRI grant will have a profound, positive impact in Seneca Falls.

Seneca Falls has a unique and storied history in our nation. But like so many once-thriving downtown environments in upstate New York, Seneca Falls has endured its share of struggles to attract and keep owners of small businesses, such as restaurants and retail shops, in its downtown area.

The future opening of del Lago Resort and Casino, combined with other future company relocations and expansions currently under negotiations, is poised to give Seneca Falls the perfect opportunity to utilize the DRI grant and create a vibrant, attractive downtown area for people moving to the area for new job opportunities and for the tourists that both del Lago and the beautiful Finger Lakes region will bring to Seneca Falls.

I urge you to approve the Seneca Falls Development Corporation's proposal for this Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant. Thank you, in advance, for your consideration in this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Kolb', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brian M. Kolb  
Assembly Minority Leader

ALBANY OFFICE: Room 933, Legislative Office Building, Albany, New York 12248 • 518-455-3751, FAX: 518-455-3750  
DISTRICT OFFICE: 607 West Washington Street, Suite 2, Geneva, New York 14456 • 315-781-2030, FAX: 315-781-1746  
E-mail: kolbb@assembly.state.ny.us

June 8, 2016

Casey Galloway  
Owner & Chef  
Café 19  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Joell Murney-Karsten  
Chair  
Seneca Falls Development Corporation  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Dear Joell:

As one of the newer businesses in Seneca Falls, Café 19 has managed to attract and become a favorite destination for both locals and tourists. The modern design of Café 19 makes it an exciting and comfortable restaurant for a large demographic of people. In honor of our town's history, our establishment recognizes and celebrates the women's rights movement. The name, Café 19, pays tribute to the 19th amendment which gave women suffrage.

Since our opening three years ago we have made a substantial impact on the community. At Café 19, we strongly believe in change and growth. The addition of del Lago will help our community do just that - change and grow. The resort and casino will bring prospective consumers only a few miles from Cafe 19's location. However, in order to bring such business into the heart of Seneca Falls, we need financial assistance.

Change is hard, but not impossible. For example, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton fought their entire lives for an amendment they never saw passed. Even though both women saw little progress they persevered. That same spirit Anthony and Stanton had lives on in members of our community. Like Anthony and Stanton, we will commit our lives to advocating for change, and will do so until progress is made.

Thank you to the entire Seneca Falls Development Corporation board for its commitment to this community. We look forward to hearing the Regional Economic Council's decision on the NYS Downtown Revitalization Initiative. This grant would cause Seneca Falls to flourish!

Sincerely,

  
Casey Galloway

**Connie Hodde, LMT**  
therapeutic massage for women



To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Connie Hodde, and I am writing this letter to support the Seneca Falls Development Corporation (SFDC) and the Seneca Falls Town Council in their pursuit of New York State's "Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

I own my own massage practice in the town of Seneca Falls, where I administer to women with chronic pain issues. As a woman who has dedicated her career to the care of other women, I appreciate the town of Seneca Falls and its rich history of women's advocacy. It has the perfect atmosphere for women such as myself, who are pursuing their passions through starting businesses. I also believe that the town has much to offer, not only as a tourist destination, but as a long-term place to live.

Your investment in Seneca Falls to promote tourism and expand the downtown area's appeal would have a profound effect on my business. Massage is usually viewed as a luxury service, and therefore tourists are more likely to engage with the kind of work I offer. But it would help more than just my business. Revitalizing the downtown area would help many other women like me, who have found Seneca Falls to be a wonderful home and excellent place to start their businesses.

I believe that Seneca Falls will truly benefit from your investment in our future. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Connie Hodde, LMT  
Therapeutic Massage for Women  
12 N. Park Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Charles L. Schillaci  
Commissioner

Margaret A. Birmingham  
Deputy Commissioner

**COUNTY OF SENECA  
DIVISION OF HUMAN SERVICES  
1 DIPRONIO DRIVE  
P.O. BOX 690  
WATERLOO, NEW YORK 13165**



**315-539-1830**

**1-800-688-7188**

**Fax: 315-539-4251**

(Fax: Not for Service of Papers)

To Whom It May Concern;

Please accept this as a vigorous letter of support for the Seneca Falls Development Corporation's application for Downtown Revitalization funding.

Thirty years of employer closings and downsizing leave the Seneca Falls area in an opportune situation for reinvention. Recent support of the Women's Hall of Fame with regional economic development funding for its relocation to the previous Seneca Knitting Mill, provides Seneca Falls with a great visitor anchor organization to build on in the community. Other efforts to draw people to live, work and start businesses are in various stages.

The Seneca County Division of Human Services has a long-standing relationship with workforce and economic development initiatives in the area. We stand ready to assist the Seneca Falls Development Corporation in their Downtown Revitalization effort. Our Workforce Development, Youth Bureau and Veterans programming will work to assist businesses in identifying and hiring and training low income individuals, youth and Veterans into any existing and newly created positions.

Please look at this application highly as it is part of a community of partnership that is solid and able to build on extremely successful and resourceful accomplishments in the past.

Should you need any additional information regarding our services, please do not hesitate to contact us at 315-539-1830.

Sincerely,

Charles L. Schillaci  
Commissioner

Margaret A. Birmingham  
Deputy Commissioner

Charles L. Schillaci  
Commissioner

Margaret A. Birmingham  
Deputy Commissioner

**COUNTY OF SENECA**  
**DIVISION OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
**1 DIPRONIO DRIVE**  
**WATERLOO, NEW YORK 13165**  
**315-539-1905**  
**315 539-1790**



**Michael J. Whirtley, Director**  
**John P. Vrabel, Deputy Director**  
Department of Workforce Development &  
Youth Bureau

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter of support for the Seneca Falls Development Corporation's application for the 2016 Downtown Redevelopment Initiative Grant.

Seneca County Workforce Development and Youth Bureau strongly supports this grant and the collaborative efforts to serve the residents and businesses in our community. In holding true to our vision and mission, together we can continue to provide quality access to our resources. We promote equal opportunities by empowering individuals and families towards greater self-sufficiency and improved quality of life. We have a strong commitment to the well-being of our community and businesses with an emphasis on low income individuals, youth and veterans.

Seneca County Workforce Development and Youth Bureau will provide the following services:

- Occupation skills training
- On-the-Job Training
- Skills upgrading
- Job readiness training
- Adult education and literacy activities
- Customized training for businesses

The Seneca County Department of Workforce Development and Youth Bureau supports collaboration and partnership within our community. Please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Whirtley  
Director



*del* **LAGO**  
RESORT • CASINO

June 1, 2016

Dr. Anne M. Kress  
Mr. Danny Wegman  
Co-Chairs  
Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council  
Rochester, NY

Dear Dr. Kress & Mr. Wegman:

We would like to commend and congratulate the Seneca Falls Development Corporation and the Town of Seneca Falls on its commitment to revitalizing their downtown area and preserving its historical significance as the "Birthplace of Women's Rights". We are therefore writing in support of Seneca Falls' application to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative in the Finger Lakes Region.

It has been our hope from the beginning that del Lago Resort & Casino will help to stimulate the local economy and draw more tourism into the Finger Lakes Region by forming a marketing coalition with local towns and businesses. By Seneca Falls committing to a revitalization project, they are aligning themselves with our marketing coalition, which we believe will result in significant benefits to both Seneca Falls and del Lago Resort & Casino.

A revitalized Seneca Falls will result in an increase in unique, local attractions for our guests at del Lago Resort & Casino. Neighboring historic villages, like Seneca Falls with its distinct charm and historic offerings will enhance the extended stay concept in the region. del Lago will assist in promoting tourism to Seneca Falls' Historic District to our anticipated 3.4 million guests per year, and enroll Seneca Falls' businesses in del Lago's Rewards Partners

Program where del Lago's Rewards Club members will be able to visit local businesses and use their points to buy goods and services with no associated fees to these businesses. del Lago Resort & Casino will also create 1,800 jobs once it is fully operational, which we anticipate to be in August of 2017.

This is just a few of the numerous ways that del Lago anticipates collaborating with Seneca Falls and its businesses in the near future.

Sincerely,

Jeff Babinski  
Executive Vice President & General Manager

June 6, 2016

Sarah, Matthew and Stephania Ferrara  
Ferrara Lumber  
30 West Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Joell Murney-Karsten  
Seneca Falls Development Corporation  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Dear Joell:

Ferrara Lumber has been a fixture in Seneca Falls, New York since 1959. We expanded by 4000 feet in 1982 to showcase hardware, kitchen and bath products. During '82 a cooperative called "Do It Best" was purchased. The business has maintained its position in the face of competition and adversity for over 50 years!

We are third generation owners with a strong commitment to Seneca Falls and our customers. Our plan is to be a vital component of the construction industry in Central New York. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative is just what Seneca Falls and our business needs. Orders would be fueled by businesses completing renovations and new families moving to the area.

Sincerely,

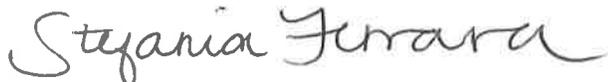
Sarah Ferrara



Matthew Ferrara



Stephania Ferrara



June 9, 2016

Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development  
400 Andrews Street - Suite 300  
Rochester, NY 14604



Dear Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council members:

Generations Bank supports the Seneca Falls Development Corporation's (SFDC) proposal for the 2016 Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant. Generations Bank, formerly known as Seneca Falls Savings Bank, was formed in 1870 by a group of local business people that had a vision for great things in Seneca Falls. As the only bank headquartered in Seneca County where our most significant customer base lives, works and plays, we have a strong commitment to see our area prosper.

We are in the midst of a \$1.2 million renovation to our Seneca Falls flagship office, incorporating the most up-to-date banking technology while maintaining our personal, relationship-based services. This project follows on the heels of our \$5 million conversion of an abandoned IGA supermarket into our state-of-the-art headquarters at 20 E Bayard Street, Seneca Falls. We see great potential for continued economic prosperity for Seneca Falls – if we can garner the much needed financial support.

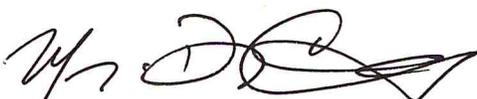
Seneca Falls primary strength is its heritage as **the** home of Women's Rights. Add to that the Seneca-Cayuga Canal running through the Town's heart, the newly expanded operations of ITT Goulds Pumps very nearly located to the Town's center, the upcoming opening of the first rate del Lago Resort and Casino drawing millions to the Finger Lakes Region – just 5 miles from Downtown Seneca Falls, the New York Chiropractic College with its campus within the Town's limits and an intact Main Street, and you have a recipe for success anywhere in the world!

What Seneca Falls needs is an injection of about \$20 million into its Downtown. The proposed DRI provides half of what is needed! The remaining \$10 million is on tap with the National Women's Hall of Fame renovation and repurposing of the former Seneca Falls Knitting Mill to become the Center for Great Women. The Hall of Fame has secured nearly \$6 million already, enough to get them in their new home by mid-2017! We also have a medical device manufacturer ready to locate in Seneca Falls, which is another \$5 million plus project with 30 jobs. There are several other smaller projects in the planning stages as well.

The DRI could also further programs to help low-to-moderate income families get a hand up – not a hand out. Generations has already established an auto program and a home ownership program that could easily be duplicated on a larger scale through the SFDC. Our programs have given families hope and goals, resulting in a renewed spirit that drives them to success.

We hope that you approve the Seneca Falls Development Corporation's proposal for this Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant, and we know that Seneca Falls will make the most of it.

Sincerely,



Menzo D. Case  
President & CEO



June 6, 2016

Dr. Anne M. Kress  
Mr. Danny Wegman  
Co- Chairs  
Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council  
Rochester, NY

RE: *2016 Downtown Revitalization Initiative*

Dear Dr. Kress and Mr. Wegman:

The Gould Hotel, as a proud member of the Seneca Falls Chamber of Commerce and the Seneca Falls Business Alliance, strongly supports the Seneca Falls Development Corporation's proposal for the 2016 Downtown Redevelopment Initiative Grant.

The Gould Hotel has been a mainstay in Seneca Falls since the building's construction in 1920 and has struggled along with Seneca Falls through many challenges over the past 40 years. In 2013, the Gould Hotel, which had briefly been named the Hotel Clarence, returned to its roots as the Gould Hotel and continually strives to build upon the rich history of social importance in Seneca Falls and the Finger Lakes Region. The Gould Hotel owners purchased and contracted Hospitality Concepts Group LLC for oversight of the operations of the property to help stimulate the economic growth in Seneca Falls. Having made multiple investments into the property and the downtown region, including an additional investment of \$400k in 2015, they are proud to offer support to the Seneca Falls Development Corporation.

Featuring guest rooms, a casual dining restaurant, tavern, bar and banquet facilities, the Gould Hotel's business is dependent in part upon tourism to our area as well as business travel in conjunction with local corporations. With the revitalization of the Seneca Falls Downtown, we would have the opportunity to serve the thousands of tourists who would be drawn to the area by the del Lago Casino as well as the other wonderful attractions Seneca Falls has to offer such as the National Women's Hall of Fame and the Women's Rights National Park. We are proud to do our part in creating a vibrant downtown where people will want to live, work, shop and visit with their families.

Thank you for your consideration, we look forward to the bright future of Seneca Falls.

Sincerely,

Dan Pigula  
Bedford Falls Enterprises; Dba: The Gould Hotel

June 3, 2016

Home Necessities

100 Fall Street

Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Seneca Falls Development Corporation (SFDC)

20 East Bayard Street

Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Dear SFDC:

Thank you for submitting an application for the NYS-wide Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

This grant would directly and indirectly benefit Home Necessities. Seneca Falls needs investment to attract new families. Families that move to the area will be in the market for our products (couches, tables, chairs, etc.).

Sincerely,

Manager

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, sweeping loop on the left side and a series of vertical and diagonal strokes on the right side, ending in a long horizontal tail.

June 3, 2016

Lin's Kitchen  
71 Fall Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

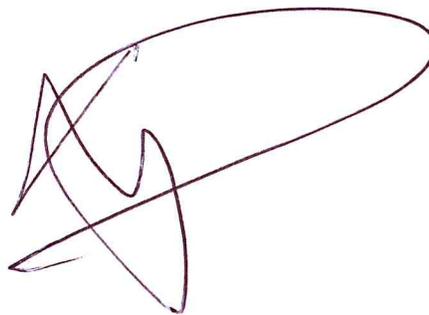
Joell Murney-Karsten  
Chair  
Seneca Falls Development Corporation  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Dear Ms. Murney-Karsten:

Today someone from the Seneca Falls Development Corporation (SFDC) visited the restaurant. I understand that the SFDC is applying for a grant through NYS that would benefit downtown Seneca Falls and my business. More tourists and permanent residents would boost our sales.

We strive to offer the best service. Our website <http://www.linskitchentogo.com/> allows customers to create an account, order online and pickup in about 15 minutes. If Seneca Falls is awarded the grant perhaps other businesses could receive assistance and update their websites as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

6/6/16

June 3, 2016

Patrick Vanelli  
Little Italy Pizza & Pasta  
118 Fall Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Seneca Falls Development Corporation (SFDC)  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Dear SFDC Board:

Increased tourism to home of the Women's Rights Movement has the potential to boost our sales since we are located next door to the Women's National Historic Park and the Wesleyan Chapel. The revitalization of downtown Seneca Falls would definitely attract more tourists – not to mention permanent residents! I look forward to hearing the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council's decision.

Sincerely,



Patrick Vanelli

THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK



SENATOR  
**MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO**  
54TH DISTRICT  
MAJORITY WHIP OF THE SENATE

**CHAIRMAN**  
CODES  
**CO-CHAIRMAN**  
NYS LEGISLATIVE TASKFORCE ON  
DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH & REAPPORTIONMENT

**COMMITTEES**  
FINANCE  
RULES  
CRIME & CORRECTIONS  
ELECTIONS  
HOUSING  
INVESTIGATIONS  
JUDICIARY  
RACING & WAGERING  
TRANSPORTATION

June 2016

Joell Murney-Karsten, Chairwoman  
Seneca Falls Development Corporation  
20 E. Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, New York 14456

Dear Joell:

As the New York State Senator for the 54<sup>th</sup> Senate District, it is my pleasure to offer my full support for the Seneca Falls Development Corporation's application for funding to the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council.

Enclosed is a copy of my correspondence to Dr. Anne Kress and Mr. Danny Wegman, Co-Chairs for the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Council, to ask for their favorable review of your application.

It is my hope that your application will be favorably reviewed and considered. If I can be of further assistance to you on this or any other matter of interest or concern, please do not hesitate to let me know.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

Michael F. Nozzolio,  
Senator, 54th District

MN/jsg/lms



THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK



SENATOR  
**MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO**  
54TH DISTRICT  
MAJORITY WHIP OF THE SENATE

CHAIRMAN  
CODES  
CO-CHAIRMAN  
NYS LEGISLATIVE TASKFORCE ON  
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INVESTIGATIONS  
JUDICIARY  
RACING & WAGERING  
TRANSPORTATION

June 2016

Dr, Anne Kress,  
Mr. Danny Wegman  
Co-Chairs  
Finger Lakes Regional Economic Council  
400 Andres Street, Suite 300  
Rochester, New York 14604

Re: Seneca Falls Development Corporation  
2016 Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Dear Dr. Kress & Mr. Wegman:

As the New York State Senator for the 54<sup>th</sup> Senate District, it is my pleasure to offer my full support for Seneca Falls Development Corporation's application for funding for the 2016 Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

The Seneca Falls Development Corporation (SFDC), with the approval of the Town of Seneca Falls, has submitted a proposal for the 2016 Downtown Redevelopment Initiative grant. Downtown Seneca Falls is distinctively positioned to maximize the impact of a Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Like so many downtown regions, Seneca Falls struggled through numerous challenges over the past 40 years. A once-thriving area of retail shops, service providers and small businesses witnessed the loss of several major employers: the Seneca Army Depot, Sylvania and Guaranteed Parts. In addition several others businesses have downsized including ITT/Gould's Pumps). This triggered the loss of good paying jobs, which severely impacted the local economy. The decline in population and increase in the poverty rate both reflect the difficult times that hit the Town of Seneca Falls and our region.

Seneca Falls: 119 Fall Street, Seneca Falls, NY 13148 • (315) 568-9816 • FAX: (315) 568-2090  
Albany: Room 503, Capitol, Albany, NY 12247 • (518) 455-2366 • FAX: (518) 426-6953  
Toll Free # 1-888-568-9816  
www.nozzolio.nysenate.gov • nozzolio@nysenate.gov



June 2, 2016

Dr. Anne M. Kress  
Mr. Danny Wegman  
Co-Chairs  
Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council  
Rochester, NY

Subject: Seneca Falls Development Corporation (SFDC)  
2016 Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Dear Dr. Kress and Mr. Wegman,

As a grateful recipient of New York State funding for rehabilitation of the historic Seneca Knitting Mill and as an active member of the Seneca Falls community, the National Women's Hall of Fame fully supports SFDC's application for funding under the Upstate Revitalization Initiative for beautification and improvements to our town, its "main" street, and its waterfront.

The *del Lago Resort and Casino*, with an expected draw of well over three million annual visitors, creates an obvious need for easy access to tourism destinations close to their venue. Seneca Falls is the obvious first choice.

Foundation elements are already in place to transform Seneca Falls into the premier "destination small town" in the Finger Lakes -- beautiful natural resources, a picturesque village, and strong historic connections with some of the most important movements in American history (women's rights, abolition, industrialization).

Funding will enable Seneca Falls to capitalize on this rich history. Partnering with local museums, downtown businesses, and *del Lago Resort*, as well as the regional wine and food trails -- we envision day trips (and longer stays) for visitors to enjoy coordinated "history" tours to our museums and historical sites, to shop in stores that sell regional products, and to have easy access to waterfront activity on the canal and Van Cleef Lake.

Creating this "destination" town -- a beautiful place to live and work -- will not only draw national and international visitors, but will encourage businesses to stay and new businesses to locate here, offering current and soon-to-be new residents to "shop local" and buy locally made products.

The Hall's progress in rehabilitation of the historic Knitting Mill continues. New York has invested in this important piece of local, regional, and national history. A full and attractive downtown with shopping and restaurant options will help to attract visitors to the Hall's new location and keep visitors in the area longer.

The NWHF strongly urges the FLREDC to consider the SFDC proposal.

With best regards,



Jeanne Giovannini  
President, Board of Directors

*President*  
Jeanne M. Giovannini

*Vice President*  
Eileen S. Hartmann

*Secretary*  
Audrey Johnson

*Treasurer*  
Marianne O'Connor

Betty M. Bayer  
Kate Bennett  
Marilyn P. Bero  
Dr. G. Lansing Blackshaw  
Rona Carr  
Menzo D. Case  
Virginia DeJohn  
Jeanne Baker Driscoll  
Rachelle M. Franklin  
Margaret Gan  
Barbara Janowitz  
Robert E. Kernan, Jr.  
Marie McKee  
Dr. Judith L. Pipher  
Dr. Sujatha Ramanujan  
Carol E. Scott  
Sharon P. Stiller

*Emerita*  
Nan Johnson

76 Fall Street  
Post Office Box 335  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148  
T 315 568 8060

[www.womenofthehall.org](http://www.womenofthehall.org)

June 2016

Seneca Falls Development Corporation

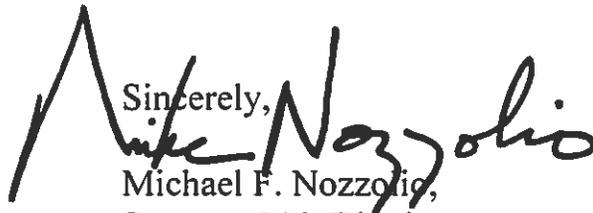
Page 2

Today, Seneca Falls has been presented with unique opportunities to revitalize the downtown area. Foremost among these is the construction of del Lago Resort and Casino, slated to open in February 2017. This destination resort is just five miles from downtown Seneca Falls, and will create over 1,800 permanent jobs. These employees will need housing (medium to high-end), services and shopping opportunities. With a Downtown Revitalization grant, the SFDC can leverage the resources of del Lago to create a vibrant downtown where people will want to live, work, shop and raise their families. In addition, the SFDC is negotiating with a medical services company to bring 35-50 immediate full-time jobs to downtown Seneca Falls with large growth potential.

In addition to its employees, the estimated 3.4 million annual visitors to del Lago will seek out places to shop and experience the Finger Lakes region during their stay. The centerpiece of their plan is to draw them, and thousands of other tourists, to downtown Seneca Falls to explore the Town's heritage. Seneca Falls is proud to be the home of the National Women's Hall of Fame and the Women's Rights National Historic Park. In addition, the Seneca Falls Historic District will be enhanced by new displays and activities that will be developed through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant.

This grant has my full support and I ask that you give it every possible consideration. Thank you for your attention to this request.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,  
  
Michael F. Nozzolo,  
Senator, 54th District

MN/jsg/lms

# Patrick J. Morrell

Attorney at Law  
102 Fall Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Seneca Falls, New York 13148

Patrick J. Morrell, J.D.  
John M. Sipos, J.D. (1941-2013)

Telephone: 315-568-5221  
Fax: 315-568-2265

June 8, 2016

Joell Murney-Karsten, Chair  
Seneca Falls Development Corp.  
20 E. Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Re: Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Dear Ms. Murney-Karsten:

As the sole proprietor of a business in downtown Seneca Falls, I was very pleased to hear that the Seneca Falls Development Corporation is pursuing the Downtown Revitalization Initiative for our community.

Seneca Falls is a unique community that attracts visitors to experience its historical significance as the birthplace of women's rights, natural beauty as the gateway to the Finger Lakes and small town charm. I am often struck by the variety of license plates from other states and provinces that I see on the cars outside my office during the summer months and around the holidays. I expect that the opening of the del Lago Casino and the continued growth of the Finger Lakes wine industry will increase the number of visitors to our community. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative would be vital to the Town's efforts to give those visitors to our community a reason to stay and support our local economy. In turn this would help Seneca Falls realize its potential as a tourism destination and a wonderful place to live.

Thank you for your efforts and the efforts of the Seneca Falls Development Corporation in pursuing the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Morrell

PJM/cel

6/6/2016

New York State  
Downtown Revitalization Initiative

As an owner of an independent Jewelry store for over 35 years, and building owner of 11 years, I have seen a great reduction the amount of foot traffic for retail businesses in our Downtown due in part to greater mobility of the people, the large box stores, shop at home and the internet. The total numbers of customers is down greatly. With the increase of all expenses and profits down, this makes it difficult to invest in the needed upkeep or remodeling in our buildings.

Seneca Falls in the past had many manufacturing jobs that paid a good wage and people would spend some of that money in our restaurants, consumer goods and other services that our downtown offered.

Currently with the upcoming move of the National Women's Hall of Fame to the former limestone block Souhan Knit building and the Women's Rights National Park located in our Downtown we do experience some business from the visitors. The Seneca Waterways Museum showcasing our past history is also a great asset to our Downtown.

I look forward to the increase of visitor's from the soon to open Del Lago Casino which should also benefit the local wineries.

For New York State to invest in Downtown Seneca Falls and partnering with the local businesses it will have a good return on the investment that the state will see beneficial results.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Mark Robinette  
Owner



90 Fall Street  
Seneca Falls, New York 13148  
315-568-6222

# SENECA COUNTY

---

CHAMBER of COMMERCE

June 10, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to offer support for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant application submitted by the Town of Seneca Falls. This grant will provide much needed funding to transform the downtown area into a vibrant center for economic growth and development. It will also help transform the community into a key gateway for our important Finger Lakes Region.

The funding accessed through this grant will help leverage previous state investment (from programs such as the New York Main Street program) and continue the excellent progress made north of the Canal in the Fall Street business district. Together, these investments will have a dramatic and far-reaching impact on the visual and economic climate of the area.

Seneca Falls is uniquely positioned as the North Eastern Gateway to the Finger Lakes and welcomes thousands of visitors (throughout the year) to the region's famous wine country – serving as a prime showcase for the agricultural industry. In addition, major manufacturing operations such as Goulds Pumps/ITT are indicative of the diversity found within our economy and represent an ideal fit with the regional economic council's identified strengths.

I urge your support for this important grant application. Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey M. Shipley  
President & CEO  
Seneca County Chamber of Commerce

# SENECA OFFICE PRODUCTS

59 FALL STREET, SENECA FALLS, NEW YORK 13148

June 6, 2016

To: the Seneca Falls Development Corporation

From: Stewart B. Jensen

Re: The Downtown Revitalization Initiative

We have owned and managed an office supply firm on the main street here in Seneca Falls since 1994. We do have a vibrant existing customer base which spans four counties. However, we have seen many businesses leave or fail despite growing tourism. The area needs to be more interesting to industry and corporate offices. Larger employers which spawn smaller support businesses. We have a leg up on many villages in that we have strong attention though tourism, but to make people and business desire to make Seneca Falls their home. That's the key. How I can help? As an office supply store as our core business, and as we own our building, we can spin off another business in our canal side store front renting bicycles, canoes and kayaks. These rental businesses most likely would eventually do well, but frankly, would need a core business to sponsor them through the first several seasons. Adding employees for that business would strengthen our overall workforce as well. Mixing fun for tourists and locals with work related office supplies, I think, makes a statement in itself. Actually, simply the fact that we are a small office supply store thriving in today's environment reflects how vibrant how community is. Not only do we have the canal side storefront level currently unused, we also have a fourth floor which could be additional apartment space adding one more customer to downtown's restaurants and shops.

We have already taken steps to enhance a SF visitor's experience. We have a "bored boater" section of the store supplying coloring books, crafts, toys etc. When we lost our downtown pharmacy, simply as service to the locals and tourists, we added over the counter medicines and personal care supplies. The lack of a pharmacy is rather embarrassing and might possibly be part of your focus.

I have not addressed the importance of our town as being the birthplace of women's rights because that is someone else's wheel house. However, I have been deeply involved in the parking crunch which happens here during the summer which is devastating to pedestrian traffic. This parking crunch, I believe is directly responsible for no pharmacy and no breakfast restaurant. A \$30K study recommending solutions and enhancements has been done by the Town, but could use grant money if that's possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate,  
Respectfully,  
Stewart Jensen  
(315)568.4183

June 6, 2016

Ann Sandroni  
Owner  
Downtown Deli  
53 Fall Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Joell Murney-Karsten  
Chair  
Seneca Falls Development Corporation  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Dear Joell:

As owner of the Downtown Deli, and Chair of the Seneca Falls Business Association, I am thankful for your pursuit of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant. We are all working to see Seneca Falls vibrant and full of retailers again! Downtown vacancies are disheartening, but not insurmountable.

Funding, training, poverty reduction and increased public transportation is just what this community needs to create and retain permanent jobs. The implementation of these elements (as outlined in your plan) would eliminate empty store fronts and fill apartments - downtown and beyond. We look forward to hearing the Regional Economic Council's decision.

Sincerely,



Ann Sandroni

# SENECA FALLS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DISTRICT OFFICES  
P.O. BOX 268, 98 CLINTON STREET  
SENECA FALLS, NEW YORK 13148-1497

ROBERT MCKEVENY  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
TEL: 315-568-5818

ROBERT J. BOULWARE  
BUSINESS MANAGER  
TEL: 315-568-5874  
FAX: 315-712-0535

June 1, 2016

Dr. Anne M. Kress, Co-Chairperson  
Mr. Danny Wegman, Co-Chairperson  
Finger Lakes Economic Development Council  
400 Andrews Street, Suite 300  
Rochester, New York 14604

Dear Dr. Kress and Mr. Wegman:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of full support for the Seneca Falls Development Council's grant request of \$10 million for its Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

As Superintendent of Schools and active participant in numerous local and regional initiatives, this grant will provide necessary support for Seneca Falls to capitalize on an opportunity to re-establish itself as the Gateway to the Finger Lakes and desired location for tourists, families, and entrepreneurs.

Having transitioned from a village with the highest per capita wealth of any village in the United States to an area that felt effects of the recession, Seneca Falls is poised to become revitalized. The Town of Seneca Falls, Seneca Falls Local Development Corporation, and Seneca Falls Central School District are committed to working in partnership to share our local pride and opportunity to become a showcase for residents, visitors, and businesses.

The School District has also felt the effects of the recession, as follows:

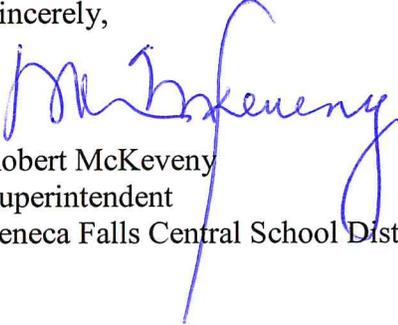
District Enrollment	1800 students in 1993	1230 students in 2016
Free & Reduced Lunch Program	11 % in 1993	50% in 2016

Even with the decline in population and increase in poverty rates, the community takes great pride in the school district, as evidenced by the overwhelming approvals of annual budgets and capital project referendums. Efforts to attract businesses and families would provide much needed support to local taxpayers who bear an increased burden to support our great school district. Such efforts would also enable the school to share great programs and partner with businesses and merchants to provide instructional opportunities outside of the schools and classrooms. The School District's current Strategic Plan promotes partnerships and connections with the community to enhance education. We would look forward to working with the Town of Seneca Falls and the Seneca Falls Development Corporation to further our efforts to provide meaningful educational opportunities (internships, job shadowing, community service, skills training, etc.).

Seneca Falls is a proud community, steeped in tradition and history, and ready to engage in a positive revitalization period that will benefit all stakeholder groups, including the Seneca Falls Central School District.

I urge you to give strong consideration to approve the \$10 million grant award. The funding would be used to implement a revitalization vision and plan. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss this letter of support at greater length.

Sincerely,



Robert McKeveny  
Superintendent  
Seneca Falls Central School District

# SENECA FALLS VISITOR CENTER

89 Falls Street – P.O. Box 388

Seneca Falls, New York



(315) 568-1510

staff@senecamuseum.com

## HERITAGE AREA

June 01, 2016

Dr. Anne M. Kress  
Mr. Danny Wegman  
Co- Chairs  
Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council  
Rochester, NY

RE: *2016 Downtown Revitalization Initiative Support*

Dear Dr. Kress and Mr. Wegman:

The Seneca Falls Visitor Center is located at in the middle of historic downtown Seneca Falls and serves as the starting point of interest for local and regional history and attractions. The Visitor Center welcomes approx. 25000 visitors a year from all over the USA, Canada and the Rest of the World. The Visitor Centers primary purpose is to inform and assist visitors not only to the highlights of Seneca Falls but to the entire Fingerlakes Region.

We wholeheartedly support the Seneca Falls Development Corporation, in its endeavor for the 2016 Downtown Redevelopment Initiative grant. We are convinced that this will greatly assisting our local economy and will also bring people to the area to live here or establish businesses here. Once a thriving industrial town, Seneca Falls has embarked on a plan to reinvent itself as a key tourism destination and the gateway to the Fingerlakes Region and with your assistance the positive gains already achieved will only become greater ensuring a vibrant and growing economy.

We therefore strongly urge the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council to consider Seneca Falls for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Podzuweit", written in a cursive style.

Chris Podzuweit  
Executive Director  
Seneca Falls Visitor Center  
Seneca Museum of Waterways and Industry  
Seneca Falls Heritage Area

June 6, 2016

Sherry Laney  
Owner  
Sherry's Bear & Frame Shop  
67 Fall Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Joell Murney-Karsten  
Chair  
Seneca Falls Development Corporation  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

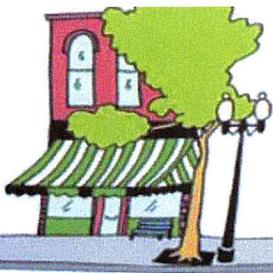
Dear Joell:

Thank you for applying for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant on my behalf. I am hopeful that the outcome will be positive and that NYS funding will be awarded to Seneca Falls. Investment in the downtown area is sure to attract more families to the area – not to mention tourists.

My best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sherry Laney".

Sherry Laney



# Sinicropi Florist & Gift Shop

64 Fall Street, Seneca Falls NY

(315) 568-6345 or (800) 436-6345

June 6, 2016

Joyce Sinicropi  
Sinicropi Florist and Gift Shop  
64 Fall Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Joell Murney-Karsten  
Seneca Falls Development Corporation  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Dear Joell:

Our company was founded in the fall of 1975 at our present location of 64 Fall Street. Our continued growth, necessitated by an ever-increasing demand for our products, prompted us to expand to the adjoining available retail space to our west in 1980. The expansion tripled our display area and gave us the opportunity to respond to customer requests for additional high-quality, unique gifts.

We have achieved success because of our unique personal service, superb quality, and creative, full-value designs. Over the years we have become the symbol of the very best in guaranteed floral service and gifts because our goal has been to exceed our customer's expectations with quality, value, and professional service.

Almost everyone in our community is our customer, including leading corporations, nursing homes, hospitals, restaurants, hotels, professionals, retail stores, and our college. There is always room for growth! A New York State grant would do marvelous things for this community and this business.

Thank you for your diligence,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joyce Sinicropi".

Joyce Sinicropi

June 6, 2016

Dr. Brian Solomon  
Solomon Family Chiropractic  
31 State Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Joell Murney-Karsten  
Chair  
Seneca Falls Development Corporation  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Dear Joell:

I support your pursuit of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant. Solomon Family Chiropractic has been located at 31 State Street in Seneca Falls since 2002. My practice occupies the lower level of the building. The building's upper level has been converted into an apartment. There is also a two bedroom apartment in the back of the building.

There are over 40 windows throughout the house – most of which stretch from the floor to the ceiling (seven feet). Over the years I have replaced several of them. However, the correct size windows are expensive and smaller windows require reframing. In the future I hope to replace all of the windows, tear off the existing siding, insulate, re-side the building and blacktop the driveway.

A revitalized downtown will attract more families to the area. More residents mean more potential patients! Thank you for applying for the grant on my behalf.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read "B. Solomon".

Brian Solomon



June 8, 2016

Re: Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Dear Chairman Cesar A. Perales and others concerned:

The downtown revitalization of Seneca Falls is ripe for opportunity. As a small business owner dedicated to operating in our towns downtown district, I have been located here for 7 years and excited to see the positive changes to our community.

The moneys from this grant will be able to draw attention to the gems of our Women's Hall of Fame, the restoration of the Seneca Knitting Mill, draw neighbors to our waterways and help our community to capitalize on the incoming job creation and tourism created from the soon to open del Lago Resort and Casino.

Our downtown is easily walkable and attractive to the residents of our area and is attractive to the constant flow of advanced degree students and families associated with the New York State Chiropractic College. The demographic of our population varies from seniors who live in beautiful homes and apartments close to downtown to college students and new families who are taking advantage of available affordable housing.

Small business to large corporations call Seneca Falls home; these businesses include Corporate headquarters for Goulds Pumps/ITT and Generations Bank, but also small family businesses like mine and so many others throughout downtown that keep our community glued together. My business would certainly improve with increased downtown living and working individuals whether buying new homes or moving into rentals in our community.

Infusion of these revitalization funds could provide our community with the ability to capitalize on the gifts our region naturally provides as well as taking advantage of the private and governmental investments that have already made great impacts to our community.

I know our community is ready for the development, and this grant seems to be a tremendous vehicle to get us to shared prosperity.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Bruning". The signature is stylized with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Jim Bruning, Agent  
State Farm Insurance

June 3, 2016

James Stevers  
Stevens Garage  
1 Walnut Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Joell Murney-Karsten  
Seneca Falls Development Corporation (SFDC)  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Dear Joell:

My family owned auto repair shop has been passed from father to son. We take pride in our heritage of honesty and integrity. We offer oil changes, annual NYS safety inspections, battery replacement – you name it!

Yesterday I was approached by a representative from the Seneca Falls Development Corporation. She explained that the Board is trying to obtain a grant through NYS. This grant would affect the downtown area has the potential to encourage current residents to stay in Seneca Falls and those out of town to consider moving here.

Thank you for advocating for my business!

Sincerely,



James Stevers

THE

**COPY**

SHOP

105 FALL STREET  
SENECA FALLS, NY 13148-1492  
PHONE (315) 568-8608 FAX (315) 568-8622

June 6, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this in support of The Downtown Revitalization Initiative. We depend on our walk-in traffic for at least 30% of our business. If we had a vibrant downtown that offered businesses which would contribute to making our community a walking village again, it could improve everyone's businesses. The services we are greatly in need of are: a full service grocery store, a public Laundromat, a pharmacy, a bakery, a movie theater, a place to get an ice cream cone and a cafe/coffee shop that is open early for breakfast and lunch. As things stand now, folks must drive to get to those services - sometimes to the next village, sometimes to the next county. Any help that could be provided would be very welcome.

We live in such an historically rich area and we do not do nearly enough to make people aware of this. Seneca Falls is the Birthplace of Women's Rights; Waterloo is the Birthplace of Memorial Day; two religions began in this area - Mormonism and Spiritualism; and, of course, Seneca Falls also lays claim to being the town that Bedford Falls in the movie *It's A Wonderful Life* is based on. Our yearly *It's A Wonderful Life* Festival has been an extremely popular event drawing people from all over the US and Canada which continues to grow every year. With a vibrant downtown we would be able to offer more events to draw people to our area and, hopefully, they will fall in love with it and want to live here.

Sincerely,

Pam Bryan, Owner  
The Copy Shop

June 6, 2016

The Hairtique  
73 Fall Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

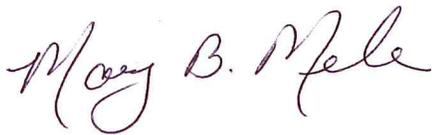
Joell Murney-Karsten  
Seneca Falls Development Corporation (SFDC)  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Dear Joell:

As you know – we are located in the heart of downtown Seneca Falls. Sadly, there are four vacant store fronts adjacent to our location. This exemplifies the challenge facing small towns like ours across the region, state and nation.

I was thrilled to learn that the SFDC is pursuing a grant through New York State that could refresh Seneca Falls' store fronts and businesses. I believe that an upgraded downtown will increase our population and visitors to the area – all of whom will need our services. Thank you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary B. Mele". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name "Owner".

Owner



June 6, 2016

Downtown Revitalization Initiative - Review Committee Members  
Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council  
400 Andrews Street – Suite 300  
Rochester, NY 14604

Dear Review Committee Member;

Wayne-Finger Lakes Board of Cooperative Educational Services (WFL BOCES) enthusiastically supports the town of Seneca Falls application to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. We believe Seneca Falls is one of the most wonderful and historic towns in the region. The town which sits upon beautiful Seneca Lake is home to many of the regions very precious attractions to include the Women's Hall of Fame, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Cayuga State Park, the Finger Lakes Regional Airport, and several hamlets like Bridgeport, Halsey Corner, Lehigh Valley Junction, and Nichols Corner. However, it must be noted that Seneca Falls' downtown has perhaps the most historic significance in the regions; as home to the Suffragette and Abolitionist movement, host of the first Women's Rights Conventions and now home to the Women's Hall of Fame. Seneca Falls was also the model for one of the greatest movies ever; "It's a Wonderful Life". Seneca Falls will celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the movie this year, announcing the revitalization award during these celebrations would be a wonderful gift.

WFL BOCES provides cooperative educational services to the Seneca Falls Central School District and 24 other school districts in Seneca, Ontario, Wayne, and Yates County. WFL BOCES also provides adult education through-out the nine county Finger Lakes Region. We have provided educational services to members of the town for over 60 years.

WFL BOCES is committed to supporting this effort by continuing our workforce development efforts to provide highly-skilled individuals who can support the new business initiatives created by the Seneca Falls downtown revitalization efforts. WFL BOCES provides Guest Service Gold curriculum in our Adult Education Programs, which trains hospitality workers in customer service, restaurant services, and hospitality. Our Culinary Arts program trains future chefs that can provide world-class dining for guests in beautiful downtown Seneca Falls. In September 2017; working with Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Western New York Culinary Center, we will begin a Farm to Table program that will train future chefs to use fresh food for local farmers to provide healthy and delicious meals. All of these efforts will ensure the businesses in the newly revitalized downtown Seneca Falls have highly-skilled employees.

Thank you for your efforts to continue to make the Finger Lakes region more prosperous and a better place to live and work. Again, we whole heartedly support the application by the town Seneca Falls to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, you may contact me at [SBischoping@WFLBOCES.org](mailto:SBischoping@WFLBOCES.org) or 315-332-7284.

Sincerely,



Scott Bischoping  
District Superintendent

June 8, 2016

Becky Bly  
Owner  
Women Made Products  
91 Fall Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Joell Murney-Karsten  
Chair  
Seneca Falls Development Corporation  
20 East Bayard Street  
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

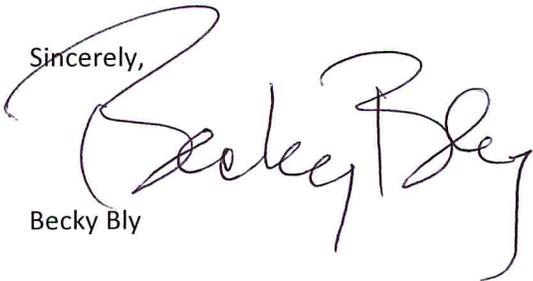
Dear Joell:

WomanMade Products is a feminist business rooted in Seneca Falls, NY, the birthplace of women's rights. Our mission is to empower, inspire, and entertain through imaginative arts and crafts, writings and illustrations, and creative and fair-traded gifts from around the world. The sale of many of the products we carry benefit women and children with educational resources, cancer research and care, support for the elderly, and by creating employment opportunities.

Increased tourism is attainable given Seneca Falls' history, but financial assistance to new and existing businesses is necessary. I was pleased to hear of the SFDC's pursuit of a 10 Million dollar grant through NYS. It's just what Downtown and Seneca Falls needs in order to grow.

Sincerely,

Becky Bly

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky Bly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "B".