Applications for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative will be received by the Regional Councils. Applicant responses for each section should be as complete and succinct as possible. Applications should be submitted as Word documents and must be received by the appropriate Regional Council by 4:00 PM on June 1, 2018 at the email address provided at the end of this application. Application guidance is provided in the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Guidebook found on the DRI website at www.ny.gov/dri.

**BASIC INFORMATION**

Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region: Mid-Hudson

Municipality Name: White Plains

Downtown Name: Downtown White Plains

County Name: Westchester

Vision for Downtown: The vision for downtown revitalization of the Post Road Corridor is to stimulate and sustain economic development by advancing this corridor of Downtown White Plains as a prime desirable location to create a thriving hub with civic, art and cultural, housing, retail, office and medical uses.

**JUSTIFICATION**

The City of White Plains has undergone a period of impressive growth, particularly in its Downtown. Developer interest and major projects, including new development, renovations, and capital improvements have flourished and thrived along most of the City’s major downtown corridors and nodes – Main Street, Mamaroneck Avenue, and the White Plains Metro-North Train Station. However, the Post Road corridor, the City’s southern gateway, has struggled to keep pace with the other areas of the Downtown and remains underperforming and dormant. Many existing businesses need significant façade and streetscape improvements. There is also a dearth of businesses to serve the growing needs of the White Plains Hospital including restaurants, parking and service retail. The Post Road corridor contains a mixture of uses including government and commercial office buildings, a major hospital and related medical offices and facilities, retail/commercial businesses, and residential housing including the largest public housing site in the City. The Post Road corridor is a vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian connector corridor, linking Post Road residents to employment centers both in and outside the Downtown. This corridor has tremendous potential for economic development. The corridor has seen recent improvements, including the completed phase 1 of the redevelopment of the public housing site, expansion at White Plains Hospital, and the construction of a new public parking structure. In addition, a private mixed use development has been approved on the west end of the corridor. Despite these actions, additional effort is needed to unlock the dormant potential and stimulate economic activity in the corridor. This opportunity for significant investment will serve as the linchpin of transformation and revitalization for the Post Road Corridor of Downtown White Plains.
DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

1) Boundaries of the proposed DRI area

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is an important opportunity for the City of White Plains to progress existing development initiatives, and to capitalize on future investment opportunities in its Downtown. The City’s entire Downtown area is approximately 0.70 square miles and is shown on the map below. The boundary includes the Fisher Hill Neighborhood to the southwest, Maple Avenue to the south, North Broadway to the northeast, Park Avenue to the North, and the Bronx River Parkway to the west. The City’s Central Business District or core is located along Main Street and Mamaroneck Avenue. To the west is the new White Plains Multimodal Transit District adjacent to the White Plains Metro-North Railroad Station. Also within the City’s downtown core area is the Post Road corridor or the southern gateway into the City. The Post Road corridor contains a mixture of uses including government and commercial office buildings, a major hospital and related medical offices and facilities, retail/commercial businesses, and residential housing including the largest public housing site in the City (Brookfield Commons, previously known as Winbrook). The Post Road corridor performs several functions, all of which are vital to the economic competitiveness of the City. It is a vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian connector corridor, linking Post Road residents to employment centers both in and outside the Downtown. This corridor has tremendous potential for economic development; and despite several recent successes, additional efforts are needed to unlock its dormant potential and stimulate economic growth.
2) Description of catchment area.

Downtown White Plains is among the largest central business districts in Westchester County and is both a local and regional destination. One of the many goals of the City’s Comprehensive Plan is to create a “vibrant, mixed use [downtown] Area with pedestrian, streetscape, transit and signage improvements and land uses that complement one another.” The Comprehensive Plan also states that “downtown residential development has become, and will continue to be, a major economic tool for the City to create a truly livable, walkable, urban environment with a 24/7 character.” Since this plan was adopted in 1997 and updated in 2006, Downtown White Plains has undergone tremendous growth. 822 multifamily residential units have been constructed since 2005, with an additional 4,000 multi-family residential units and 500,000 square feet of retail/commercial space either under construction or currently in the development pipeline. Restaurants, shopping, great schools, easy access, a lively nightlife and abundant recreation have all contributed to creating a vibrant, year-round downtown that is attractive to all, especially millennials, empty nesters, and dual-income young families.

The population within the City of White Plains, and particularly in the Downtown, has grown at a faster rate than Westchester County, the New York Metropolitan Area, and the State. White Plains is, in fact, the fastest growing city in New York State. Over the last 25 years, the total population of the City of White Plains increased by 19 percent, from an estimated 48,000 to 58,000 people in 2015. In the Downtown, where over 12,000 residents live, the population increased by 27 percent between 2000 and 2015, an annual growth rate more than five times higher than the rate of both Westchester County and the New York Metropolitan Area. On May 24, 2016, the Census Bureau announced that the City of White Plains is the fastest growing city in the state of New York.

Much of the growth in Downtown White Plains has been driven by young professionals and empty nesters over the age of 65, who represent 35 percent and 18 percent of Downtown’s population, respectively, as compared to 25 percent and 16 percent in Westchester County as a whole. These populations have been attracted to Downtown’s growing stock of multifamily housing; walkable retail and restaurants, relative affordability, and easy access to New York City. In fact, the White Plains Metro-North Railroad Station maintains the highest ridership in Westchester County attracting daily commuters from points north, and an increasing number of commuters from New York City.

Population projections provided by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) indicate that the City’s total population will increase by 27% by the year 2050. Of particular note is that the City’s Downtown population area is projected to grow by 45% by the year 2050 (NYMTC TAZ Classifications 2015) underscoring the notion that millennials and empty nesters are attracted to White Plains because of its amenities, accessibility, services, and housing options to name a few. Given the existing and projected population of the...
City’s downtown, it is critical that Downtown White Plains continue to support and enhance its vibrant, year-round atmosphere for its current and future residents.

Despite this unprecedented development boom in the City’s core, the Post Road corridor has struggled to keep pace with the other areas of the Downtown and remains underperforming and dormant. Many existing businesses need significant façade and streetscape improvements. There is also a dearth of businesses to serve the growing needs of the White Plains Hospital including restaurants, parking, service retail, etc. In 2016, a citywide retail inventory identified a total of 97 vacant storefronts with the largest concentration of vacancies (20% of the total) located on or in the vicinity of the Post Road corridor. Moreover, out of approximately 75 storefronts either in the vicinity of or directly on the Post Road corridor, 20 stores or 26% are vacant, despite being located a mere 5-10 minute walk from the traditional Core Area, and as compared to the City’s two other major retail corridors – Main Street/Mamaroneck Avenue area (12% vacant) and Central Avenue (11% vacant).

3) Past Investment, future investment potential.

The Downtown’s combination of multimodal regional transportation links, walkability, housing choices and diversity renders the City extremely attractive to potential developers and investors. Six new residential projects were built in Downtown White Plains over the past 15 years, totaling 1,825 units, the opening of the Cambria Hotel and Suites and a 58-unit mid-rise residential project (La Gianna) in 2014 (Figure 3A).

![Recent Development Activity in Downtown White Plains](image)

White Plains Hospital is undergoing significant changes since its affiliation with Montefiore Health Systems including the expansion of the Dickstein Cancer Treatment Center and the recently proposed 225,000 square foot Hospital Office Building. In addition, the completion of the Prelude, a 103-unit residential building that replaced one of the towers in the Brookfield Commons complex, features the White Plains Education & Training Center, which is a state of the art facility that provides workforce training that supports employer driven regional workforce needs. Plans are underway to commence Phase 2 of the Brookfield Commons redevelopment project, which involves the replacement of a second tower with a new, nine-story, 129-unit multi-family residential building.
An additional 4,000 multi-family residential units and 500,000 square feet of retail/commercial space have been either recently completed, are under construction, or in the development pipeline as follows (see Figure 3B):

- **The Continuum** – 55 Bank Street - a 561-unit rental building (including 112 affordable units) (Phase I – 288 rental units, including 57 affordable units, recently completed and 50% leased.);
- **Lennar Multifamily Communities** – at 60 South Broadway – the redevelopment and replacement of the Westchester Pavilion Mall,
- **The Collection** – Westchester Avenue near Bloomingdale Road - development of 276 residential units (including 17 affordable units), 25,000 square feet of commercial/retail space and 745 space parking structure;
- **The Broadstone** – Mamaroneck Avenue and East Post Road – The approved project consists of three connected buildings providing a total of 434 residential units, 460 parking spaces, 7,855 square feet of retail space, and residential lobbies, and amenity space.
- **Hamilton Green (The White Plains Mall)** – 200 Hamilton Avenue – Proposal to redevelop 3.74-acre site into a mixed-use development containing 600 apartments, 95,000 square feet of street level retail and restaurant uses, structured parking for 720 vehicles and publicly accessible green space.
- **440 Hamilton Avenue** – The approved project includes the conversion of the existing 339,000 square foot office building into a multifamily residential development as well as a new, seven-floor apartment building along Barker Avenue frontage.
- **1 Dekalb** - 77 unit mid-rise residential building (approximately 79,000 square feet), including 16 affordable units (20%), and with 103 parking spaces located in a structured garage beneath the building.
- **The Boulevard (Grid Properties, Inc.)** – located between West Post Road and Maple Avenue - the redevelopment project consisting of approximately 220,000 square feet of retail, restaurant and fitness space, a 720 space parking garage and 12 townhome multi-family dwelling units;
- **The Norden Lofts** – 121 Westmoreland Avenue – adaptive reuse of a historic industrial building into a 6-story, 48,000 square foot residential building with 65 loft style apartments and 80 parking spaces.
- **The Westmoreland Lofts** – 136 Westmoreland Avenue – construction of a 58,000 square foot, five and a half story mixed use building with 2,700 square feet of manufacturing use and 1,500 square feet of retail use and 62 rental apartments.
- **The Esplanade** – South Broadway and Lyon Place – conversion of an assisted living facility into a 212 unit residential apartment building (including 13 affordable units);
- **Good Counsel – 52 North Broadway** – this campus repurposing project consists of 470 residential units (with an affordability component to be determined), an assisted living facility and dormitory units for Pace University.
- **City Square – 50 Main Street / 1-11 Martine Avenue** – Ginsburg Development recently purchased the 571,000 square-foot complex and will convert the 262,000 square foot office building into a mix of rental apartments and office space.

**Figure 3B  Current Downtown White Plains Development Projects**

The City is also committed to investing in its infrastructure. In 2013 the City completed construction of the Lyon Place Parking garage. The reconstruction of this 650 space parking facility was selected as a Priority Project by the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council and received a $2 million grant award from the Empire State Development Corporation, in recognition and acknowledgment of the critical role of the parking garage in economic development for the Post Road Corridor. The Lyon Place Parking Garage includes approximately 500 spaces available to the public to support the workforce, shoppers, diners, etc.

Major property owners in the Downtown, including the owners of The Westchester Mall, the City Center, and One North Broadway are committed to investing in White Plains to ensure its economic success. This is evidenced by several significant renovation projects described below:

In 2017, the owners of the City Center shopping center, located at 1-29 Mamaroneck Avenue and home to Target, Nordstrom Rack, Barnes and Noble, and Shop Rite, completed major renovations including:
• Implementation of a valet service via a newly constructed valet loading zone along the Mamaroneck Avenue frontage within the City right-of-way;
• Re-glazing the lobby curtain wall and skybridge connecting the lobby space to the parking garage to direct more light into interior spaces;
• New glass and extruded aluminum marquee awnings above both the Mamaroneck Avenue and plaza entrances;
• Installation of escalators from the renovated Mamaroneck Avenue lobby space to the second floor to enhance pedestrian access to both the retail uses and parking structure, and add vitality to the street; and,
• A unified interior/exterior signage plan, including the use of digital signage to reduce visual clutter and achieve more modern branding.

Additional improvements to be made at the City Center in 2018 include:
• Upgrades to the fountain plaza including a new water feature, additional plantings, seating, lighting, food kiosks, and a performance stage at the Main Street entrance;
• Reconfiguration of the existing pedestrian and vehicular circulation at the Main Street entrance/exit and plaza drop-off area to improve safety, prevent cueing and reduce conflicts;

In 2017, the Simon Property Group, owners of the Westchester Mall, located at 125 Westchester Avenue, completed a significant renovation project to the property, including: updating the exterior façade finishes, replacing certain doors with automatic sliding doors; replacing certain windows; new exterior signage, including wayfinding signage; shielding of the valet parking area; and removal of windows facing Armory Place to create a covered elevated outdoor common dining area for the restaurants on the renovated top level food hall. The proposed improvements modernized the building and enhanced the shopping experience.

Lastly, the owners of One North Broadway completed a major renovation of the plaza area facing Main Street to enhance its appearance. The 1.79-acre (77,862 square feet) site is located at the northwest corner of Main Street and North Broadway and is adjacent to 275 Main Street – Walmart. Upgrades included new pavers installed throughout the area, new stairs from Main Street, new raised planters, seating areas, lighting, and a raised platform/stage area. In addition, a living Green Wall was installed along the westerly wall adjoining the 275 Main Street Building.
In addition, as a result of the Multimodal Transportation Center Redevelopment Project, a Cleaner, Greener, Communities Program initiative undertaken by the City of White Plains, in conjunction with the New York State Energy, Research, and Development Authority (NYSERDA), and with Priority Project designation by the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council, the City released the **White Plains Transit District Strategic Plan** for the area 1/3 of a mile around the White Plains Metro-North Station. The Strategic Plan was the result of a 15-month planning study that culminated with a series of near-term investments and potential long-term development scenarios with the purpose of redeveloping the area in and around the Metro-North railroad station into a more attractive and welcoming gateway, transportation hub, and destination that maximizes the potential economic development of the area. In an effort to implement the Strategic Plan, on June 12, 2017 the City released a **Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI)** to solicit interest in the redevelopment of approximately 4.5 acres of land adjacent to the Metro-North railroad station. The City anticipates issuing a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) in the fall of 2018.

Finally, the White Plains Train Station, Metro-North’s third largest station, will be getting a significant makeover, starting in March 2018, as part of a three-year, $135 million Metro-North Station Improvement Initiative. Major changes to the station include:

- New side platform with radiant heat flooring for snow/ice control;
- New replacement heated stairs from side platform;
- New elevator at main entrance to side platform;
- New bathrooms, ticket office, and food vendor space;
- New and larger, glass enclosed waiting area;
- Upgraded main entrance;
- New, expanded lobby, artwork, and newsstand;
- Upgrades to the Main Street and Hamilton Avenue entrances as well as the Mott Street Tunnel;
- New platform canopies with wood ceilings;
- Addition of WiFi, USB charging ports, electronic messaging, LED lighting, security cameras, and speakers throughout the station.

The project will be split into three phases, as follows: Phase 1: March 2018 to Fall 2018; Phase 2: Fall 2018 to Summer 2019; and Phase 3: Fall 2019 to Winter 2020.
Despite the City’s ability to capture developer interest and investment within the vicinity of Main Street, Mamaroneck Avenue, and the Transit District, challenges remain in revitalizing the Post Road corridor. Maximizing the City’s development potential along this corridor has been a goal for many years; however, multiple ownerships, existing zoning, and infrastructure needs have served as impediments to this growth. In addition, the Post Road corridor lacks an inviting gateway into the City from points south. To address these issues, the City has adopted multiple Urban Renewal Plans over the years to facilitate growth and economic vitality along the corridor. A comprehensive planning study focused on revitalizing and redeveloping the corridor is essential, particularly given the expansion needs of the White Plains Hospital and the transformational redevelopment of Brookfield Commons, the largest campus of public housing in White Plains from 450 units of traditional public housing into a 1,000 unit, mixed-income and mixed-use community.

4) Recent or impending job growth.

With over 6 million square feet of office space, Downtown White Plains is among the largest regional office submarkets in Westchester County. The Downtown Study Area is home to over 30,000 jobs, more than 40 percent of which are in public administration or health care. The healthcare industry in particular represented the largest industry expansion since 2002, and continues to grow, particularly in light of the recent and planned expansion of White Plains Hospital and the opening of the Hotel for Special Surgery in 2017. Several major corporations have recently relocated or are in the process of relocating their headquarters to White Plains: Danone North America is moving its headquarters from Greenburgh to White Plains and will occupy approximately 63,000 square feet of office space at 1 Maple Avenue, also known as The Source. Approximately 400 jobs will be relocated to White Plains. New York Life moved its headquarters and 500 jobs to White Plains and occupies 150,000 square feet of office space at 44 South Broadway, also known as the Westchester One building. Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC) signed a 13-year lease for 101,000 square feet of office space at 1 N. Lexington Ave., also known as The Gateway. SMBC plans to relocate 231 jobs from its New York City office to White Plains. An additional 109 jobs will be created. Pladis, the global snacking company, moved its headquarters and 50 jobs to 10 Bank Street and Mast-Jagermeister relocated its headquarters and 65 employees from New Rochelle to White Plains and occupies a 30,000 square foot space at 10 Bank Street.

The City’s access to major roads (I-287 corridor), its proximity to the Metro-North train station (walking distance), the amenities offered in a busy downtown setting (shops and restaurants), and the talent pool are just some of the many reasons why these corporations have relocated to White Plains. Other professional services, including law firms, accountants, architects and engineers are also drawn to the Downtown by the presence of the court system and County government (Figure 4A). Released on May 24, 2016, a report entitled “Connecting to Promising Careers: Middle-Skill Jobs in the Lower Hudson Valley”, studied the changing nature of the regional economy and provided recommendations to support the education and training required to empower the local workforce. The report focused on three industries that are in-demand, projected to grow, and have opportunities for career advancement: healthcare, technology, and culinary/hospitality. These three industries, along with entrepreneurship, are the main focus of the workforce development programs at the White Plains Education & Training Center (WPETC). The WPETC creates partnerships with industry experts and employers to
successfully train and match potential employees with employers. While many Westchester County and other regional municipalities are concerned with “brain drain,” and losing their young, talented, and skilled workforce, White Plains is attracting this population and providing a valuable resource to its current and future employers and residents.

**FIGURE 4A: DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR, DOWNTOWN WHITE PLAINS, 2002-2013**

![Graph showing employment distribution by sector in Downtown White Plains, 2002-2013](image)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, OnTheMap

Total employment in Downtown White Plains fell by 4 percent between 2002 and 2013, as shown in Table 1B, however, most of the losses can be attributed to the drop in public sector employment (Figure 4A), which was largely the result of cutbacks at the County level. Since the County seat is located within the Downtown Study Area, these cutbacks disproportionately affected the Downtown area. Although data on Downtown employment is not available after 2013, public officials and other stakeholders believe that employment rose between 2013 and 2015 and will continue to rise due to the expansion of local hospitals, the impact of new development projects, and the numerous corporate relocations mentioned above.

The overall office vacancy rate for Downtown White Plains is 14 percent; however this rate is lower than the I-287 corridor and the County as a whole (see Figure 4B). In addition, the recent trend to convert office buildings into rental apartments has bolstered the City’s office market. The redevelopment of office buildings for residential use has boosted the rents for the remaining office properties in White Plains. The average asking rents for office space rose by 8% in White Plains between 2016 and 2017.
Despite its locational advantages, access to public transportation, and walkability, the Post Road corridor has seen little new development over the past two decades. The growth in demand from the healthcare sector, as indicated by the Hospital for Special Surgery’s recent lease of an outpatient surgical center on Westchester Avenue and the expansion of White Plains Hospital, suggests that the Downtown, and Post Road in particular will capture some of the growth in demand for medical office space and related amenities for medical staff, patients, and visitors. The addition of retail growth and mixed uses will also likely spur future office development, unlocking dormant potential.

5) Attractiveness of physical environment.

Downtown White Plains contains a variety of amenities, services and conveniences that appeal to every age group. Nestled among tree-lined streets, the Downtown is home to the largest shopping destination in Westchester County, featuring two regional malls (The Westchester and The Galleria), City Center (shopping, dining and entertainment center), a Target, Walmart, Shoprite, and Barnes and Noble to name a few. As was mentioned previously, several of these downtown property owners are in the process of or have recently completed major renovation projects to improve the overall appearance of their buildings and plazas.

There are numerous restaurants, bars, health clubs, a multiplex cinema, a performing arts center, and ArtsWestchester, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary in White Plains by commissioning, in collaboration with the City, “Wane One”, a graffiti artist, to create a multi-colored mural on the drop off/pickup lane on Mamaroneck Avenue between Martine Avenue and the City Center’s entrance on Mamaroneck. The mosaic-like work is meant to reflect the activity of the busy downtown business district.
In the summer of 2017, the City received a $500,000 grant from the state to implement several capital improvements to a one block stretch of Court Street between Main Street and Martine Avenue. Court Street has become the City’s “go-to” location for festivals, events and celebrations. The City’s weekly Farmer’s Market is held there, as well as a myriad of annual programs including: the Children’s Halloween festival, a nine-day holiday market, outdoor yoga, a large New Year’s Eve celebration, Cinco de Mayo, Oktoberfest, Winterfest, St. Patrick’s Day Parade, Juneteenth Celebration, JazzFest and more. The improvements to Court Street included new brick paving, streetlights, sidewalks, landscaping, and trees, as well as the addition of power outlets and security measures to protect pedestrians. These improvements created an on-street environment that better supported the logistical needs of the aforementioned events while also improving the aesthetics of the street.

The City also has a vibrant library and community destination, which underwent a recent, $2.5 million renovation, including the addition of a café with indoor and outdoor seating and an adjacent book store containing gently used books. The City is in the process of restoring the Library Plaza, which sits adjacent to the library, and on top of a Westchester County parking structure. The restoration will result in a central public space with a children’s discovery garden, a reading grove, and an eight-foot-high lawn knoll.

Downtown hotels include the Ritz Carlton, Cambria Suites, Crowne Plaza, and a Marriott Residence Inn. The Downtown is also home to several medical facilities including the White Plains Hospital, NY Presbyterian Hospital, and the Burke Rehabilitation Center. There are 23 parks city-wide, albeit more parkland is needed downtown, and excellent youth, family, and senior recreational programs.

The Downtown is centrally located within Westchester County, and has excellent access to highways and interstates including the Cross Westchester Expressway (I-287) and the Bronx River Parkway. The Downtown also features the City’s Multimodal Transit District, a transit hub featuring a heavily trafficked Metro-North commuter train station (a 30-minute express ride into Manhattan) and the County’s Bee-Line Bus system and the future hub of the new Bus Rapid Transit system that will serve the regional transportation needs of Rockland and Westchester Counties. The Downtown also has sidewalks and a bike route network with both dedicated and shared bike lanes. The City was recently awarded a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant from the New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) to further develop pedestrian and bicycle transportation and connectivity (See Section 6 for more detail) throughout the Downtown area.
The Downtown offers a variety of housing options ranging from single-family homes, to luxury high rise buildings. Townhouses, condominiums, rental apartments and senior housing facilities are also available. The availability of different types of housing with different price points helps to attract people of varying ages and incomes. In fact, 22% of housing units in White Plains are subsidized by a variety of federal, state and local programs, to provide housing options for low- and moderate-income residents and special needs residents. Finally, with 61 percent of households renting rather than owning their homes, Downtown also has a significantly higher share of renter households than either Westchester County or the metropolitan region, reflecting the growing share of millennials and empty nesters, who are more likely to rent than own.

Multifamily rental properties in Downtown White Plains have historically achieved a significant rent premium over other properties in Westchester County. The ability to achieve higher rents can be attributed to Downtown’s combination of regional transportation links, walkability, and value relative to other urban centers. These attributes have allowed Downtown White Plains to develop a significant competitive advantage in the regional residential market. Rents in Downtown have grown 43 percent since 2000 as compared to 31 percent for the County as a whole. Average asking rents Downtown also reached $3.00 per square foot per month in 2015, more than 40 percent higher than the multifamily buildings elsewhere in the County, as shown in Figure 5A below.

The downtown core is also more diverse than Westchester County, and is multicultural, multilingual and well educated. Nearly half of Downtown’s residents identify as Black, Hispanic or Asian, as compared to one-third of Westchester residents. In addition, 47.7 percent of White Plains residents have a Bachelor’s Degree or higher, 32 percent are foreign born, and 44 percent speak a language other than English.

Although the City’s Downtown has seen significant residential growth and boasts an increasingly vibrant retail and dining district, several elements could be enhanced and improved, including its walkability and bikeability, linkages to public open spaces, the development of several soft sites around the Multimodal Transit Center District, and the revitalization of the Post Road corridor. Most of the growth in the Downtown occurred in the early to mid-2000s and focused on the luxury rental market. The blocks immediately surrounding the White Plains Multimodal Transit Center and the Post Road corridor have seen little development activity over this period. As demand for a 24/7 environment grows, and New York City real estate prices remain high, Downtown White Plains will continue to emerge as a more affordable option for young professionals and empty nesters who want an urban lifestyle and appreciate the space, amenities, and affordability of White Plains relative to New York City.
6) Quality of Life policies.

Over the past five years, the Mayor has prioritized legislation focused on improving quality of life for all city residents including targeted strategies to enhance the Downtown core. One such innovative initiative, a parks and recreation fee assessed to all new multi-family residential development, helps the City mitigate the impact of additional high density residential development and associated increase in downtown residents on existing recreation resources. The downtown core, as defined in this application, contains only 5.6 acres of dedicated publicly accessible parkland amounting to a mere .01% of total downtown land area. The improvement of existing, and acquisition of new park and recreation amenities, is of paramount importance to the City.

The creation of “West-Mo”, from a traditional light industrial area to a creative arts district that permits multi-family development is a significant quality of life enhancement for area residents in the western edge of downtown. The progressive policy to encourage loft-style residential development and incentivize preservation of historic urban fabric has resulted in the approval of two new mixed-use projects with a combined total of 130 dwelling units.

Just to the north of downtown, the City rezoned the Haarlem/Holland Avenue Light Industrial District to permit mixed-use development. This light industrial district features the North White Plains Metro-North Station, the 6th largest Metro-North station, with 5,000 passengers per day. The purpose of the rezoning was to create a vibrant, transit-oriented mixed-use district, including multi-family residential, retail/commercial, and light industrial uses, while eliminating heavy manufacturing uses.

Moreover, the City’s creation of the Transit (TD-1) District, a mixed-use district located in proximity to the White Plains TransCenter, will promote transit use, walking, and biking; reduce reliance on motor vehicles; encourage the provision of publicly accessible open space; provide ground floor commercial uses that enhance the pedestrian experience; and implement design guidelines that ensure that new development is compatible with adjacent properties.

The City’s Complete Streets initiative continues to thrive, particularly given the TAP Grant award from the NYS DOT to implement pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements within the Downtown. Bicycle infrastructure will be improved through the introduction of a protected bike lane along Martine Avenue to create connections between existing bike lanes. Existing bike lanes will be strategically repainted to improve visibility and safety, and the introduction of green bike boxes will ease turning at traffic intersections and further enhance the contiguity of the bike lane network. Additional bike parking will be added as well. Pedestrian infrastructure will be improved through the introduction of high visibility crosswalks at three intersections near the White Plains Train Station, and a high visibility crosswalk with a HAWK (High-intensity Activated crossWalk) Beacon will add a vital new pedestrian crossing along Main Street. In June 2018, the City will launch a “dockless” bike share program with two operators, Ofo and LimeBike.

White Plains is strongly committed to improving its environmental and sustainable living initiatives. Under Mayor Roach, the City has banned the use of the dirtiest heating oils, and established a network of electric vehicle charging stations in municipally owned parking structures. The City has streamlined the solar permitting process and has replaced all of its street lights and parking garage lighting with LEDs, in partnership with NYPAP. The City is also making energy efficient upgrades at City buildings and facilities, and offers textile recycling to residents at the City’s Gedney Recycling Yard. This initiative diverted almost 14 tons of textiles from the waste stream in its first year. Most recently, White Plains was named as a Designated Clean Energy Community by NYSERDA and therefore was awarded a grant of a $250,000 to fund energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable development projects.
7) Public Support.

As a result of the Multimodal Transportation Center Redevelopment Project, the City released the White Plains Transit District Strategic Plan for the area 1/3 of a mile around the White Plains Metro-North Station in December 2016. The District also includes the Westchester County Bee-Line TransCenter Bus Terminal and the future site of multiple stops and planned eastern terminus of the Lower Hudson Transit Link from Rockland County to White Plains. The community-driven plan was formulated using extensive feedback received through a comprehensive 15-month community engagement process, which included a Stakeholder Task Force comprised of key community and business leaders representing various sectors relevant to this project. Six primary community-driven planning principals were developed through significant public input during the Strategic Planning process. The Stakeholder Task force worked effectively together on the Multimodal Transportation Center Redevelopment Project, and has a successful operating structure that could easily transition into a local DRI Planning Committee. The local lead for the DRI project would be the Mayor Thomas Roach.

8) Project List to Demonstrate Readiness.

The City is poised to begin implementing a series of near term strategic investments and potential long-term development scenarios to invigorate and further define its Downtown. In June 2017, the City released a Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) to solicit interest from qualified parties in the redevelopment of approximately 4.5 acres of land adjacent to the White Plains Metro-North Station. The City received eight detailed responses from qualified developers. These responses will serve to substantially inform the City’s upcoming Request for Proposal process. Moreover, the recent commencement of the Metro-North Station improvement initiative complements the City’s redevelopment efforts. Such investment will bring vitality to the Transit District while strengthening and reinforcing existing connections between the Transit District and the rest of Downtown, including the Post Road corridor and adjacent neighborhoods. DRI funds could be used to complement the funding that was received from the NYS DOT TAP grant and to implement redevelopment strategies for the Post Road corridor, including supporting the Small Business Redevelopment Fund, a Community Development fund for storefront improvements. DRI funds could also be used to support the following initiatives:

- Acquisition to create a signature downtown city park to more directly connect the downtown core with the Post Road corridor;
- Significant infrastructure improvements along the corridor to catalyze development
- Pedestrian/Cycling infrastructure improvements (as stated above to build upon the TAP grant);
- Inclusion of public art as a priority to support vitality of the Post Road Corridor;
- Assistance for small businesses within the corridor – i.e. - storefront improvements;
- Acquisition to assemble parcels to attract more significant investment and development;
- Feasibility and targeted market studies for the Post Road Corridor.

9) Administrative Capacity.

The City of White Plains has the administrative capability to manage this initiative. The Planning Department would have primary oversight over the DRI award and would involve other City agencies including the Building Department, the Department of Public Works, and the Department of Parking, on an as needed basis. The City of White Plains has the capacity and experience to oversee concurrent contracts.