



NY Forward



NY FORWARD PROGRAM

Over the Last Decade, DRI & NY Forward Have Invested \$1.4B in 176 New York Communities

Investing in **New York's Communities**

Recognizing the need to support smaller and more rural communities with economic development needs, the NY Forward was launched in 2022. Similar to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI), the program supports a more equitable downtown recovery for New York's smaller communities, with a focus on hamlets, villages and neighborhood-scale commercial centers.

NY Forward Program Funding

NY Forward provides two \$4.5 million awards to communities in each Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) region, except for the NYC region.

Through the NY Forward program, smaller downtowns receive planning and implementation support needed to attract more businesses, residents, and visitors, while also providing a higher quality of life for all residents.

The Department of State (DOS) administers the NY Forward program in close coordination with Homes and Community Renewal, Empire State Development, New York State Energy Research & Development Authority, and several other State partners.

Eligible Project Types

New development and/or rehabilitation of existing downtown buildings: Typical projects include mixed-use, commercial, residential, not-for-profit or public uses.

Public improvement projects: May include streetscape/ transportation improvements, recreational trails, park space, public art, and public realm projects.

Small project fund: A locally managed fund to implement a range of smaller projects, such as facade enhancements, building renovation improvements, public art, or business assistance.

Branding and marketing: Downtown branding and marketing projects to target residents, investors, developers and tourists. Must be one-time expenses.

Goals of NY Forward

- Create an active downtown with a strong sense of place that reflects the community's heritage and culture.
- Attract new businesses that create a robust mix of shopping, entertainment, and service options for residents and visitors, and that provide job opportunities for a variety of skills and salaries.
- Enhance public spaces for arts and cultural events that serve the existing members of the community but also draw in visitors from around the region.
- Cultivate a variety of housing opportunities that help build an inclusive and welcoming community.
- Grow local tax revenue.
- Provide amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality of life for people of all ages, abilities, incomes and backgrounds.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support investments that are more resilient to future climate change impacts.



Learn more about
NY Forward:
dos.ny.gov/NY-Forward

How to Get Involved

Check your local municipality's webpage or social media pages for more information on your community's public engagement process/opportunities. In NYC, reach out to your Borough President's Office to learn more.

Planning Process

Once a community is selected, they engage with a consultant led by a State team focused on the development of a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP).

A Local Planning Committee (LPC), comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders, is then convened to oversee the process and will work closely with the community to:

- Develop a clear and concise downtown assessment to articulate the story of the downtown and identify key challenges and opportunities.
- Review and refine the vision statement included in the NY Forward application.
- Establish goals, strategies, and pathways to achieve the community's vision.
- Identify, develop, and evaluate projects that could advance the community's vision, goals, and strategies for revitalization.
- Develop detailed project profiles for each project that the LPC recommends for NY Forward funding (the LPC will identify a final slate of projects in excess of the available NY Forward funding).
- Undertake broad public engagement throughout the entire planning process to solicit input, shape the community's vision for downtown, identify projects, and build support for plan implementation.

The resulting deliverable is the SIP containing detailed information about the recommended projects for potential funding. This document is submitted to the State for a multi-agency review. A subset of projects in the final list are selected for funding, announced for award, and contracted with the appropriate State agency for implementation.



5 Chestnut St. in Geneseo before renovations

Geneseo Project Spotlight

5 Chestnut Street in the Village of Geneseo (Round 1) renovated a former laundromat into a mixed-use space with commercial space on the ground floor and apartments on the second floor.



5 Chestnut St. in Geneseo after renovations

Open Call For Projects

Each community awarded a NY Forward hosts an Open Call for Projects. This is a means of identifying potential projects from public, non-profit and private entities. The Open Call is typically publicized early in the planning process and lasts for approximately four weeks.

During this time prospective project sponsors can submit a Project Form that details the project proposal. These proposals are then reviewed by the Local Planning Committee for funding consideration.