

# Clinton-Kirkland Downtown Revitalization Initiative



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Public input plays an important role in the creation of the community's vision and goals and in the identification of projects and development of the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP). This Public Engagement Strategy outlines the specific level, type, format, and purpose of community engagement opportunities that will be available throughout the planning process to encourage participation from a broad and diverse population. It identifies key stakeholders and outreach mechanisms that, when taken in the aggregate, will yield the input necessary to craft a strong SIP.

The Public Engagement Strategy will be implemented according to the DRI Program schedule outlined below:

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| May                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State agencies and consultant team begin work with Clinton-Kirkland</li><li>• Local Planning Committee formed</li></ul>  |
| June - July        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monthly LPC meetings begin</li><li>• Draft Downtown Profile</li><li>• Conduct stakeholder and community outreach</li><li>• Identify potential DRI projects through an Open Call</li><li>• Finalize Downtown Vision and Goals</li></ul> |
| August - September | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review potential projects</li><li>• Gather public input on potential projects</li><li>• Develop revitalization strategies</li></ul>  |
| October - November | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finalize recommended projects list</li><li>• Draft DRI Strategic Investment</li><li>• Public Presentation and comment period</li></ul>   |
| December           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final DRI Strategic Investment Plan</li></ul>  |

### II. PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT

#### DRI Application

During the preparation of the Town of Kirkland and Village of Clinton's Round 6 DRI application, the Town and Village and DRI Application Committee solicited input from the public through a survey that was distributed by the Clinton Chamber of Commerce. The survey was used as way to gauge:

- What the public would like to see improved in the community;
- What the community needs that it does not have; and
- What few words best describe the community

The survey captured a cross section of the Town and Village's residents, with over 100 people submitting responses. The public was also engaged in several informal discussions that took place at various community events such as: Chamber of Commerce's monthly networking breakfasts, popup events at the Farmers Market, and Community Conversations at the Kirkland Town Library. The results of the survey and the informal conversations were used to guide the development of the DRI application.

### Kick Off Meeting

A kick-off meeting was held May 23, 2023 with municipal leaders, state planning partners, and the consultant team. The meeting began with a walking tour through the DRI area. Conversations focused on potential projects and development opportunities that would advance the vision for downtown. Following the tour, a meeting was held with the LPC Co-Chairs to review the DRI planning process, including the scope, preliminary schedule, deliverables, and related issues including the public engagement process.

## III. STAKEHOLDERS AND ACCESSIBILITY

### Stakeholders

The DRI planning process will seek to engage key stakeholders including:

- Town and Village Residents
- Local Business Owners, employers, workers, and producers, including related economic development organizations (e.g. Clinton Chamber of Commerce, Clinton Kirkland Improvement Corporation)
- Town of Kirkland, Village of Clinton, and Oneida County Officials, Boards, and Departments.
- Town and Village Police and Fire Departments
- Transit authorities (Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Council (HOCTC), Oneida County Rural Transit System (OCRT))
- Local arts and culture groups (e.g. Kirkland Arts Center, Clinton, Historical Society)
- Educational and youth organizations (e.g. Kirkland Public Library, Clinton Central School District, Clinton Youth Foundation)
- Hamilton College
- Senior Groups (Clinton-Kirkland Senior Center)
- Minority Groups (e.g. Clinton A Better Chance)
- Faith-based organizations (e.g. Clinton Area Ministerium, Stone Presbyterian Church)
- Other civic and community groups
- Environmental and Recreation Groups (e.g. Climate Smart Community Taskforce for Clinton and Kirkland, Kirkland Trails)

State, and Federal Agencies and Organizations. May Include:

- New York State Department of State (DOS)
- New York State Empire State Development (ESD)
- New York State Department of Homes and Community Renewal (HCR)
- New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)
- New York State Department of Labor (DOL)
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP)
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
- New York State Department of Transportation (DOT)

### Accessibility and DRI Venues

Over the course of the seven-month planning process, a focused effort will be made to engage people who may not typically participate in planning programs, such as those with limited access to transportation and internet, youth, disadvantaged populations, people with disabilities, and those living outside of the Village Center (e.g. in Clark Mills). These efforts may include pop-up, in-person events as well as distribution of materials through local email lists, websites, and on local bulletin boards. Event venues will be ADA accessible and online materials will include accessibility features (e.g. compatibility with screen readers for visually-impaired users and for language translation applications) where possible. Outreach approaches will be discussed with the LPC and relevant local organizations, with revisions being incorporated as appropriate during the process.

## IV. ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

A mix of interactive in-person and virtual formats will be employed to solicit input from a broad cross-section of the community. The following engagement techniques that may be used throughout the DRI process:

- Local Planning Committee Meetings
- Public Open Houses, Surveys, and Presentations
- Interviews and Focus Groups
- Pop-ups / information stations
- Project Website and contact form

Each technique is explained further below. As the process unfolds, it may be appropriate to modify the public engagement techniques to best capture public input. Events will adhere to public health and safety guidelines.

### Local Planning Committee Meetings

A Local Planning Committee (LPC) was appointed by New York State to ensure that the SIP will reflect the interests and priorities of the community. The LPC includes a diverse group of representatives from key public, private, nonprofit, and institutional stakeholder groups and organizations:

**Co-Chair: Elizabeth Tantillo**, Mayor, Village of Clinton

**Co-Chair: Robert Meelan**, Supervisor, Town of Kirkland

**Co-Chair: Larry Gilroy**, Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council Co-Chair

**Michael Debraggio**, President, Clinton Kirkland Improvement Corporation; Executive Writer and Director of Community Relations, Hamilton College

**Molly Marris**, Board Member, Clinton Kirkland Improvement Corporation; Executive Director, Clinton Chamber of Commerce

**Jackie Walters**, Board Member, Clinton Kirkland Improvement Corporation

**Tom Neumann**, President, First Source Federal Credit Union

**Howie Schaffer**, Chief Inclusion Officer/Principal, Big Tent Consulting

**Barbara Owens**, Realtor

**Jonathon Joseph**, North Star Orchards

**Natalie Brown**, Management Consultant, Village Master Planner

**Matt Lacey**, Principal Architect, March Associates

**Lisa Magnarelli**, Director of College Events and Scheduling, Hamilton College; Board of Education Member, Clinton Central School District

**Maria Macrina**, Business Owner, The Cremeria

**Purpose:**

The LPC guides the planning process and helps to identify the most appropriate range of community engagement approaches for the DRI area. In addition, the LPC will provide input on local issues; review draft and final documents; assist in the public outreach process; and assist in the review and selection of key projects to be recommended for DRI funding in the SIP.

**Approach:**

LPC meetings are working meetings conducted by the LPC Co-chairs to provide for discussion among members and presentations on scheduled topics. They will be held approximately monthly from June to October 2023. Throughout the process, subcommittees may be scheduled to explore development opportunities in the DRI area. Members will be encouraged to participate in all DRI events.

**Public Participation and Outreach:**

All LPC meetings will be open to public observers and publicly noticed in the Waterville Times, on the

DRI website, and on the Town and Village websites and offices. All LPC meetings will have an opportunity for public comment. The public will be able to submit written comments at any time through the project website, which will also provide links to meeting materials.

**Format:**

LPC meetings will be held in person at a local ADA accessible venue with adequate room for public observers.

**Public Open Houses, Surveys, and Presentations**

The DRI planning process will include a series of public events that are intended to empower the public to participate meaningfully in the creation of the Strategic Investment Plan. Public events will inform attendees about the DRI planning process and solicit input that will guide the development of the SIP.

Three public events are planned:

**Public Open House #1 (June):**

**Purpose:**

A Public Open House will be held June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. to introduce the public to the DRI planning process and solicit their input on the draft vision and goals. The open house will also include excerpts from the Downtown Profile and Assessment, and information on the Open Call for Projects.

**Approach:**

The first public open house will be held after the first LPC meeting back-to-back with the popular Thursday Farmers Market. It will coincide with the Open Call for Projects which was released on June 12, 2023, and solicit feedback from the public on the DRI vision, goals, and potential projects. A summary of feedback received through the open house will be presented at the second LPC meeting.

**Format:**

Public Open House #1 will be held in-person at the Kirkland Arts Center within the DRI area. It will include a series of informational boards as well as interactive exercises. Members from the DRI Project team will be available to answer questions. Following the in-person event, an online survey will be made available to capture input on the vision and goals from community members who could not attend in person.

**Public Open House #2 (August) :**

**Purpose:**

A second Public Open House will be held on August 30<sup>th</sup> to present and solicit feedback on the full

list of potential DRI projects as well as the strategies to achieve the DRI goals.

**Approach:**

The second public open house will be held after the LPC has identified the full list of potential DRI project. A summary of feedback received through the open house will be presented to the LPC to inform their review of the project list at LPC meeting #4.

**Format:**

Public Open House #2 will follow a similar format to Public Open House #1 with a series of interactive boards where participants could view and comment on the DRI strategies and potential DRI projects. An image and description of each project will be available and participants will be invited to share their thoughts on each one. For public projects with special design components (e.g. streetscape upgrades), a charette format may be used where the public can comment directly on the type and location of specific design elements (e.g. trees, crosswalks, benches, public art). To facilitate broader participation, a virtual survey on the projects and strategies will be launched in parallel and remain open through Friday September 1<sup>st</sup> to allow for promotion during the Village's "First Fridays" event in September.

**Public Presentation (December):**

**Purpose:**

A final public event will be held **in early December** after the final LPC meeting. The event will present the contents of the draft DRI Strategic Investment Plan including the projects recommended to the state for DRI funding.

**Approach:**

Part education, part celebration, this event will be designed to build momentum for implementation among municipal partners, residents, the business community, regional leaders, developers, and funding partners.

**Format:**

The event will be a live presentation. Alternatively, it could be presented as a live webinar with opportunities for Q&A that would be recorded and posted online, if the community feels this would allow for broader participation (tbd).

**Focus Groups and Interviews**

**Purpose:**

Interviews and focus groups will be held to solicit input from stakeholders on key issues and themes identified for Downtown Clinton-Kirkland. These might cover topics such as complete streets, equity

and inclusivity, economic development, arts and culture, youth and families, seniors, veterans, parks and recreation, environment/sustainability, community services, healthy food, or others.

**Approach:**

Interviews and Focus Groups will be held early in the DRI planning process (June-August), with key stakeholders and groups identified with the Town and Village and LPC. These discussions will help identify critical issues and opportunities to incorporate into the Downtown Profile and Assessment; DRI Vision, Goals and Strategies; and the design of transformative projects. They will also identify priorities for the LPC to consider in their project review and selection process.

**Format:**

Formats will be determined on a case-by-case basis with each individual or group. Where possible, discussions would be conducted in-person using a round-table or charette format. Phone or virtual focus groups will be arranged as needed.

**Pop-ups and hard-to-reach populations**

During the DRI planning process, a concentrated effort will be made to collect input from larger or hard-to-reach groups. These may include families and youth, seniors, or lower income households. These strategies would seek to meet people “where they are,” for example, pop-up information booths, guest presentations at standing meetings, or interactive comment boards. The following pop-up events are proposed:

**Stakeholder meetings summer :** The consultant team will be available to schedule remote or on-site meetings with harder-to-reach stakeholder groups as needed (e.g. senior center)

**Farmers Market June 29<sup>th</sup> :** Information table at the Farmers Market to share general information about the DRI and Open Call for Projects and to advertise the public Open House happening that afternoon/evening.

Other pop-ups or information stations may be added, for example, during a First Friday event or at strategic community locations frequented by hard-to-reach populations, e.g. in Clark Mills.

**Project Website and Contact Form**

A project website <https://www.clintonkirklanddri.com/> will serve as the 24/7 central information hub for the Clinton-Kirkland DRI. The site will include general information and resources on the DRI planning process, information on past and upcoming events including participation links, event materials, a form to subscribe to the project mailing list, and a contact form for public comments. The site design will consider accessibility for different users and devices.

The public will be directed to the website throughout the project through links and QR codes on project materials (e.g. press releases, flyers, mailing list emails, community websites, social media posts) and verbally

during in-person events and interviews (TV and radio).

## V. OUTREACH

All members of the public, including identified community and interest groups, will be invited to attend public DRI events. Outreach methods will be refined through ongoing discussion with the LPC, the public, and Planning Partners. In addition to general outreach, targeted methods may be used to reach groups that are traditionally underrepresented in public planning processes. As a foundation, the approach will include traditional media and online outreach tools. The Town and Village and consultant team will distribute media materials, with the support of the LPC.

Outreach techniques will include:

- **Project Mailing List:** A mailing list will be developed from available contact lists, online subscribers, potential project sponsors, and participants sign-in sheets from DRI events. This will form the basis for email distribution of information about the DRI process and events.
- **Event announcements:** Flyers will be developed and posted in the community and/or on relevant online sites including the project website <https://www.clintonkirklanddri.com/>. These will be made available to the LPC, DRI subscribers, and stakeholders to distribute to their networks. Potential locations for cross-posting include the websites and social media pages of the Town and Village, Kirkland Town Library, Clinton Chamber of Commerce, Clinton-Kirkland Improvement Corporation, and Community Facebook page. Potential locations for posting fliers/announcements include the library, school, Hannaford, churches, local businesses, and village green.
- **Local List Servs:** Email notifications will be shared with LPC members and the public which can easily be forward to local list servs such as those for Hamilton College (including "Ham Fam"), CCSD ("parent Square"), Chamber of Commerce, Kirkland Trails, Clinton youth and sports groups, CSC task force, Foundation, etc.
- **Coordination with Local Media:** The consultant team will provide information to the Town of Kirkland and Village of Clinton in close coordination with State agencies and the LPC prior to public meetings, project-related local events, and the release of Draft and Final Documents for public review. The Town and Village will manage media releases and interviews with local media including the Waterville Times and WKTV. Local media will be invited to attend LPC meetings and public events.



## VI. KEY CONTACTS

### **Village of Clinton**

#### **Mayor Elizabeth Tantillo**

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### **Town of Kirkland**

#### **Supervisor Robert Meelan**

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### **New York State Department of State (DOS):**

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### **Consultant Team:**

The Consultant Team assigned by the state will facilitate the DRI planning process and provide technical expertise on the Strategic Investment Plan. The primary contacts for the Consultant Team are:

#### **Lisa Nagle**

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#### **Laura Lourenco**

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## VII. SCHEDULE

A general project schedule is included below. As events are added and dates are finalized, they will be announced online and through the channels described above.

