



GREATER MORRIS PARK

Downtown Revitalization Initiative



Downtown
Revitalization
Initiative

Agenda

01 Welcome

- Introductions
- Roles and Responsibility
- Scheduling
- Code of conduct

01	Welcome
02	DRI Program Overview and Process
03	Public Engagement
04	Visioning
05	Next Steps
06	Public Comments

GMP Local Planning Committee Co-Chair



Vanessa Gibson
Bronx Borough President



Lisa Sorin
Bronx Chamber of Commerce

LPC Roll Call

LPC CO-CHAIRS

- Vanessa Gibson**

Bronx Borough President
- Lisa Sorin**

Bronx Chamber of Commerce

Amr Abozaid
Yemeni American Merchants Association

Viviana Bianchi
Bronx Council of Arts

Yasmin Cruz
Westchester Square BID

Matthew Cruz
Community Board 10

Albert (Al) D’Angelo
Morris Park Community Association

Bernadette Ferrara
Van Nest Neighborhood Alliance

William (Bill) Foster
Neighborhood Initiatives Development Corporation (NIDC)

Francina Frias
NY Public Library, Morris Park Branch

Megan Guy
Simone Development Corporation

Dr. Camelia Tepelus
Morris Park BID

Anderson Torres
R.A.I.N. Total Care Inc

Rob Walsh
Bronx Economic Development Corporation

Jeremy H. Warneke
Community Board 11

State Team

NYS Department of State

Jeannette Rausch

NYC Region DRI Lead

Empire State Development

Joe Tazewell

NYC Regional Director

Homes and Community Renewal

Adrian Halvorsen

Project Manager

Roles & Responsibilities

- Lead and guide the entire DRI planning process and oversee project implementation thereafter
- Manage and assist the consultant team
- Participate in preparation and review of DRI / NYF documents
- Engage other State agencies, when needed

Consultant Team



- + Prime Consultant
Contact:
Shachi Pandey, AICP, LEED AP
- + Project Management
- + Community and Stakeholder Outreach
- + Urban Design and Planning
- + Project Feasibility and Development



- + Economic Analysis
- + Project Feasibility and Development



- + Costing and Estimation

Roles & Responsibilities:

- Lead all public engagement
- Prepare program documents
- Assist LPC with identification, development, and evaluation of potential projects
- Conduct research, as necessary

Local Planning Committee

All Local Planning Committee members are required to serve and act in the public interest and must sign a DRI Code of Conduct.

Roles & Responsibilities:

- Participate in LPC meetings
- Provide direction on planning efforts
- Provide feedback on consultant team and State
- Review documents
- Assist with community engagement and outreach

DRI Code of Conduct

- Reminder to refer to the State provided guidelines, standards and procedures for Local Planning Committee (LPC) members to follow throughout the planning process
- LPC members must sign the DRI Code of Conduct
- Members should use the Code of Conduct to guide service and actions while on the Local Planning Committee:

D.

Disclose conflicts of
interest

A.


Act in the Public
Interest

D.

Disqualify as
necessary

Documenting Conflict(s)

- Members must identify if they have a potential conflict at the first meeting in which the matter giving rise to the conflict is discussed.
- When a potential conflict is identified, LPC members must complete and submit a formal Recusal Form.
- LPC members may not vote, or attempt to influence, a discussion or vote on any project(s), where a potential conflict of interest exists.
- A list of recusals together with the recusal form completed by each recused member will be maintained for the duration of the DRI planning process.



Recusal Form

LPC Member Name _____ Date _____

DRI or NYF Name _____

Applicable Project Title(s) _____

Reason(s) for Recusal

(Check all that apply.)

☐ I or a relative or family member have a financial interest in the project. (Describe below.)

☐ I or a relative or family member have an interest as a board member, owner, officer, employee, or investor in the project sponsor. (Describe below.)

☐ I or a relative or family member have an interest as a board member, owner, officer, employee, or investor in a potential competitor of the project. (Describe below.)

☐ Other: _____

Please provide a description of each conflict. (Be complete and specific. Attach additional pages if necessary.)

Member Signature _____

Documenting Conflict(s)

- At the beginning of every LPC meeting the State will remind LPC members of their obligation to **act in the public interest and recuse if necessary.**
- The recusal **list will be updated** at each meeting.
- At the final LPC meeting, LPC members are asked to come to **consensus on a final slate of Priority Projects** to be recommended to the state for DRI funding.
- LPC members must **recuse** themselves from **voting** on individual projects **where a conflict** of interest **exists** and note such on the official LPC ballot to be submitted to the State.



Questions & Clarifications

If at any time a LPC member has a specific question regarding their situation or need advice, they may contact the **New York State Department of State Ethics Officer**.

LPC members must follow the determinations made by the Ethics Officer in accordance with the Code of Conduct and other applicable laws.

Anais Vasquez, Ethics Counsel

(518) 948-0275

Anais.Vasquez@dos.ny.gov

Scheduling

MEETING	DATE	MILESTONE
LPC Meeting #2	Week of June 09 th	Downtown Vision & Goals; Call for Projects Opens
LPC Meeting #3	Jul 21, Jul 25, Jul 28, Jul 29, Jul 30	SWOT Analysis; Public Projects Introduction
LPC Meeting #4	Sept 08, Sept 09, Sept 10 (May require an additional meeting)	Project Sponsors Presentations
LPC Meeting #5	Oct 07, Oct 08, Oct 10	Project Discussions
LPC Meeting #6	Week of October 27 th	Priority Projects Selected

02

DRI Program Overview and Process

- Program Goals
- Planning Process
- Project Development
- Tentative Investment Area Boundary

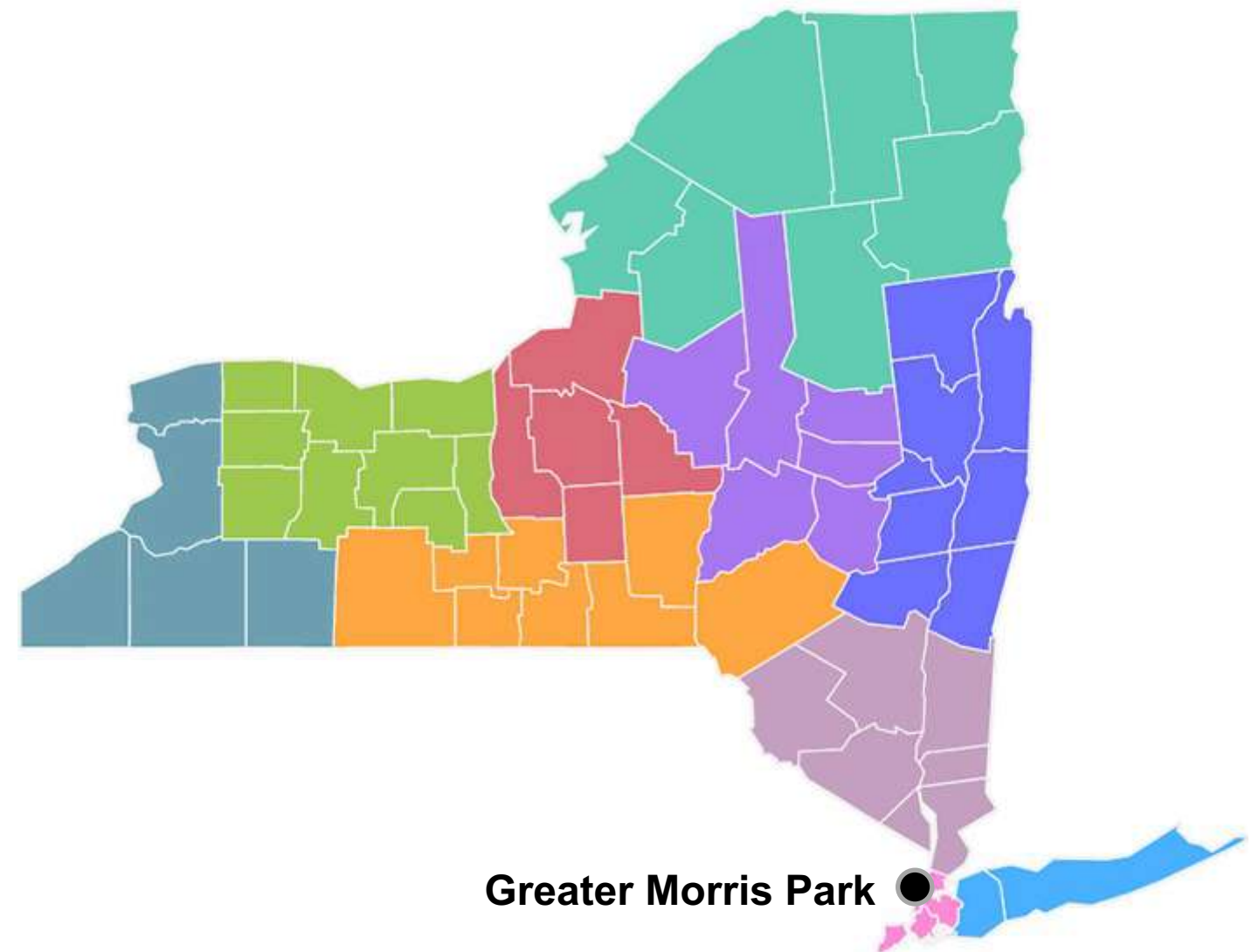
01	Welcome
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NYS Downtown Revitalization Initiative - Year 8

Across the state, the New York State's Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) seeks to **invest in communities** that are “ripe for revitalization and have the potential to become a magnet for redevelopment, business, job creation, greater economic and housing diversity, and opportunity.”

Selection Criteria:

- Physical features that promote a livable, mixed-use downtown
- Recent or impending job growth
- Ability to leverage additional public and private investment
- Commitment from local leaders



DRI Program Goals



Create an active downtown with a mix of uses and businesses



Provide enhanced public spaces that serve those of all ages and abilities



Provide diverse employment opportunities for a variety of skill sets and salary levels



Grow the local property tax base



Create diverse housing options for all income levels



Encourage the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions



Enhance downtown living and quality of life

DRI Process



APPLY

July - December 2024

- Communities work with respective BPs to prepare neighborhood proposals.
- BPs submit up to two applications tot NYC REDC
- REDC nominates community to the State
- State announced winners



PLAN

April - November 2025

- Local Planning Committees are established
- Community vision and goals are refined
- Projects are identified and refined
- LPC recommends projects to State



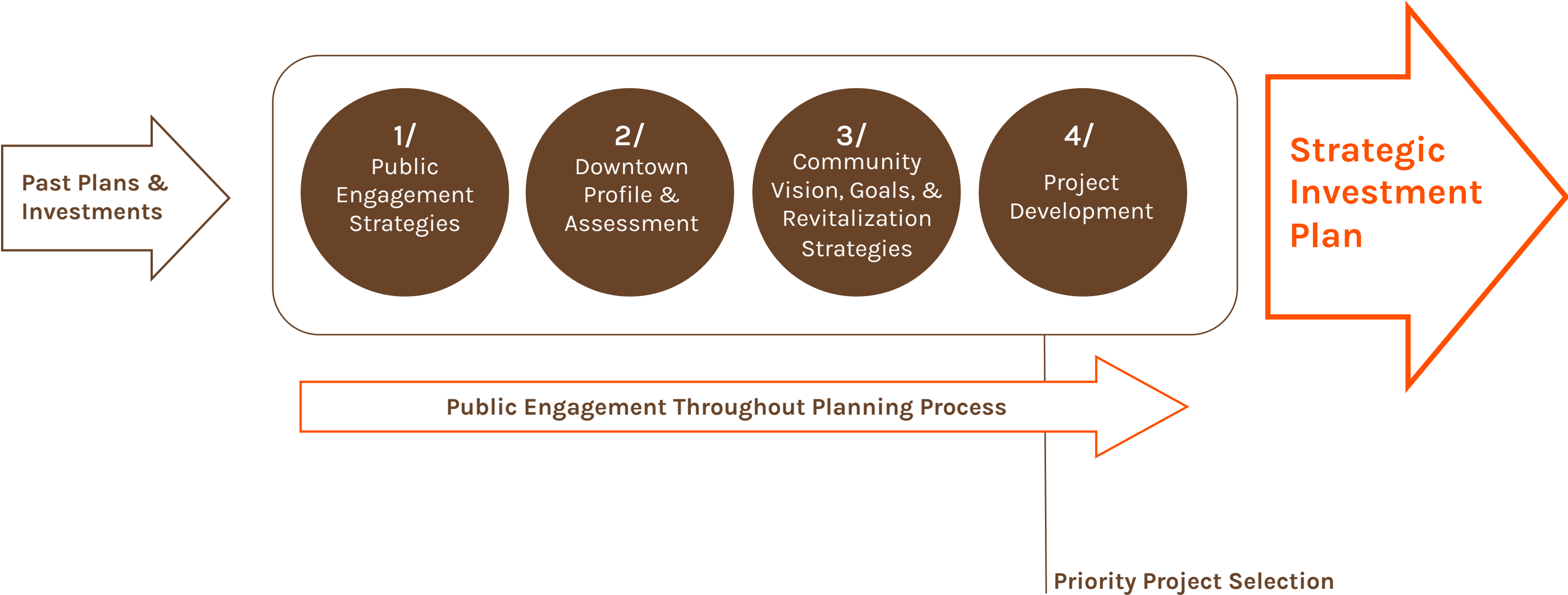
IMPLEMENT

2026 - 2031

- Final SIPs submitted to the State
- Following review State announces which Priority Projects are funded
- State executes individual project contracts
- Project Implementation within five-year window

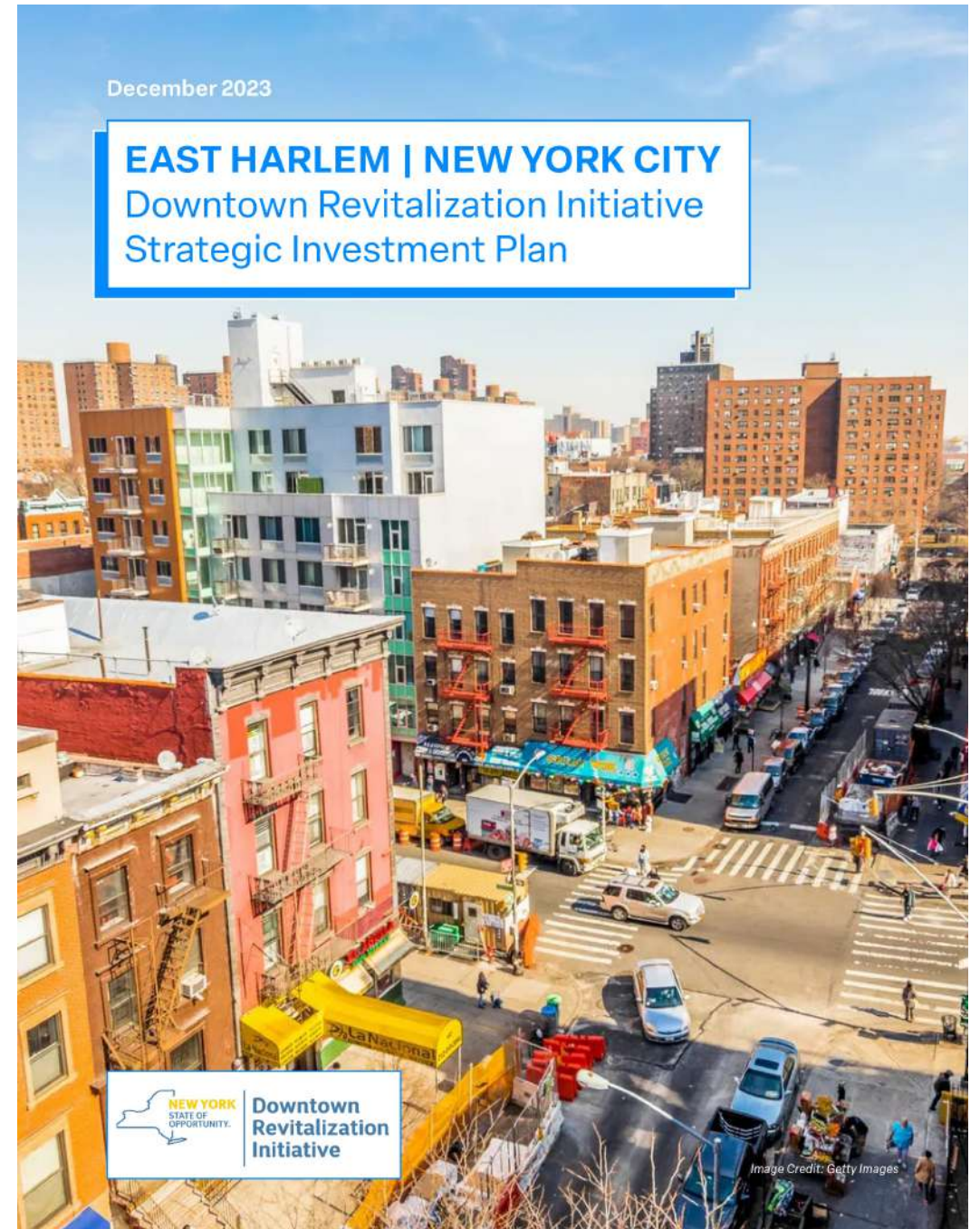
OUR FOCUS IS HERE!

DRI Planning Process



Goals of DRI Planning Process

- Consensus on a recommended list of **Priority Projects** for implementation and scope of work in each project.
- Submission of a **Strategic Investment Plan (SIP)** to the State containing recommended list of projects with profile of the area.
- **Momentum and direction** for downtown revitalization.



DRI Project Identification & Selection



**The LPC evaluates all projects based on DRI Program criteria and your community goals.
Not all solicited projects will be included in the final Strategic Investment Plan.**

Eligible Projects



Public Improvement Projects

- Streetscape & Pedestrian Improvements
- Complete Streets & Road Diets
- Recreational Trails
- Parks & Plazas
- Permanent Public Art
- Green Infrastructure & Waterfront Improvements



Rehabilitation of Existing Downtown Buildings

- Redevelopment of Real Property for Mixed-use, Commercial, Residential, Not for Profit, or Public Uses.
- Redevelopment should result in employment opportunities, expanded housing choices, and/or other community benefits.



Small Project Grant Fund

- A Locally-Managed Matching Small project fund (up to \$1,000,000)
- For Small Downtown Projects, such as:
- Façade Improvements,
- Building Renovations,
- Permanent Public Art.



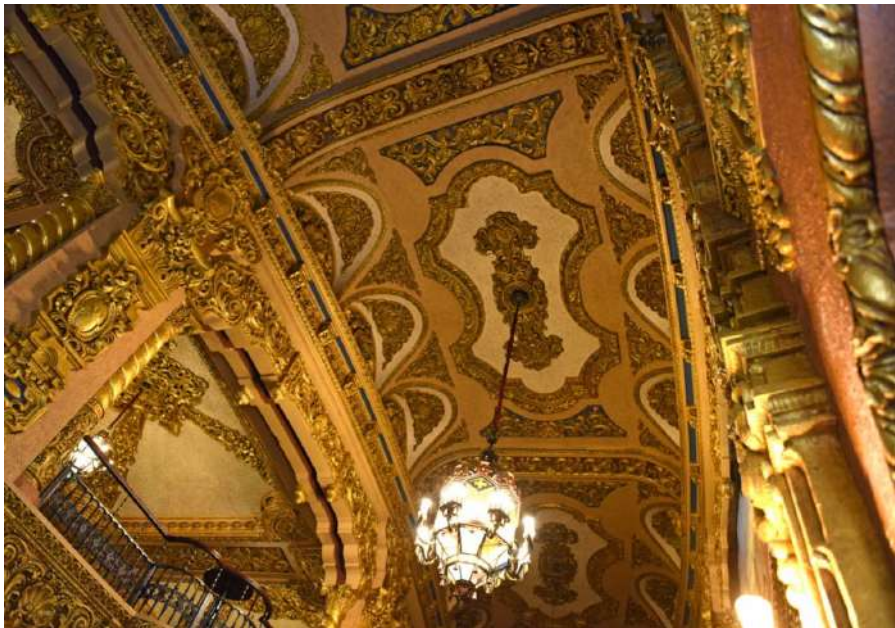
Branding and Marketing

- Downtown Branding and Marketing Projects that Target Residents, Tourists, Investors, Developers and Visitors.
- Should Result in Physical Signs
- May include minor Digital/On-line/App Components

Ineligible Projects & Activities

- Property Acquisition
- Training and Other Program Expenses
- Expenses related to Existing Programs
- Planning Activities
- Temporary Art Projects
- Operations and Maintenance or Deferred Maintenance
- Pre-award Costs

Successful Project in NYC



St. George Theatre
Staten Island



Bronx Walk of Fame
The Bronx



Kimlau Square
Chinatown, Manhattan



Greater Nexus
Co-working Space
Jamaica, Queens

Open Call For Projects

- The Open Call for Projects provides an opportunity for community members, property owners, and business owners to submit projects for consideration
- Submission period will be open to the public for at least 6 weeks, beginning after LPC#2 (June 2025)
- Applicants must complete a submission form with required information (will be available online and in hard copy at accessible locations)

Project Should be:

- **Ready to be implemented in the near-term (5 Years)**
- **Transformational**
- **Feasible**

Project Development & Evaluation

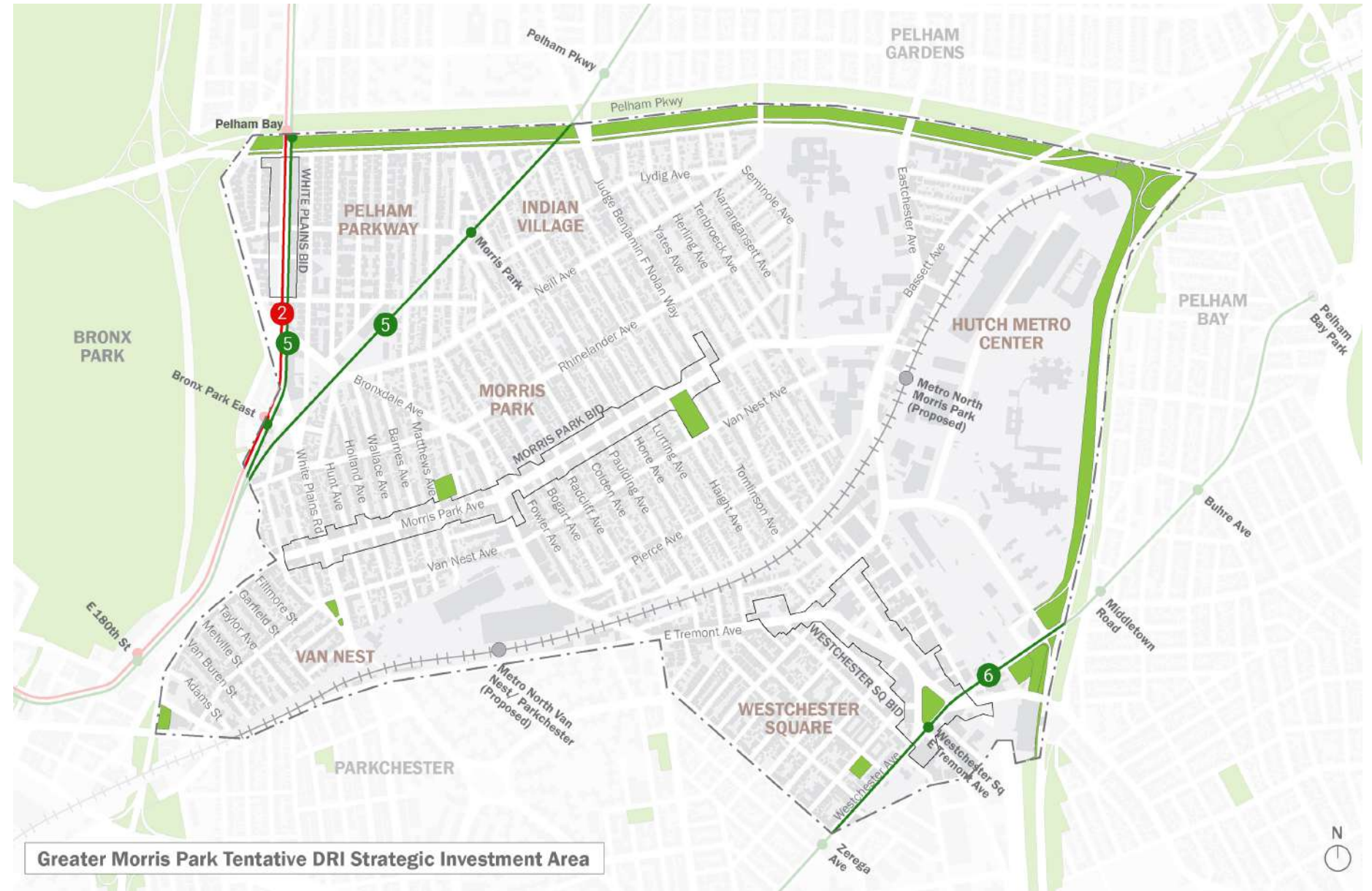
- Is the **Project Eligible** ?
- Does it **Align** with **Local & State Goals** ?
- Will the Project **Advance the Community's Downtown Vision** ?
- Will the Project have a **Transformative** and/or **Catalytic** impact ?
- Does the Project **Leverage** additional **Public** and/or **Private Investment** ?
- Are the non-DRI **Funds Secured**? Is bridge financing available ?
- Does the Sponsor have the **Capacity** to implement the Project ?
- Does the Sponsor have **Site Control** ?
- Are the **Cost Reasonable** and is this a **Cost Effective** use of public funds ?
- Can the Project **Begin** after contracting and be **Completed within 5 Years** ?

Lessons from Past DRIs

- DRI cannot fund everything – focus on projects that will have a **visible and immediate impact**
- Scattered funding may provide support to multiple areas but often results in limited impact or effectiveness as resources are spread thinly, while **concentrated investments** at specific locations can achieve targeted outcomes.
- Local **City Agency Coordination** is key for project implementation and thus we need early coordination and buy in
- Projects that **build on existing investments** increase their potential for success
- Leverage **private interest and investment.**

DRI Investment Area (Tentative Boundary)

- The **tentative** DRI boundary is established through the **application process**.
- The DRI Investment area should focus on core downtown local business shopping and cultural corridors and landmarks.
- Once the Call for Projects closes, the LPC establishes the final **DRI Investment Area**.
- DRI funds can only be used for projects with the DRI Investment Area.



03 Public Engagement

- Public Engagement Goals
- Public Engagement Strategies and Opportunities

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Public Engagement Goals

The DRI strives to be an **open and transparent** community process with many opportunities for the public to be involved. **We seek involvement throughout the DRI process.**

Outreach activities are specific to each community's needs and encourage participation from a broad and diverse population. The goals of the outreach activities are to:

1. Help craft and refine the **downtown's vision, goals, and strategies.**
2. Provide input on understanding community **strengths, needs, and opportunities.**
3. Provide feedback on proposed projects and transformative potential in downtown.



Public presentation followed by an interactive workshop during the LIC DRI.
Image Courtesy: MUD Workshop

Public Engagement Strategies & Opportunities in GMP

Who are the stakeholders, constituent groups, and hard to reach populations to engage?

- LPC Members
- Medical Mile Institutions
- Bronx House
- Neighborhood and Residents Associations
- BIDs and Merchants Associations
- Community Boards
- Development Organizations
- NYC Government Agencies (DOT, Parks, DCP, MTA, EDC)
- **Are we missing anyone?**

Public Engagement Strategies & Opportunities in GMP

How can we reach a wider audience? How can the LPC help?

What outreach methods and messaging have worked in the past?

Greater
Morris Park
Downtown
Revitalization Initiative

DRI Process

Meetings

Call for Projects

Contact



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Greater Morris Park will receive \$20 million in funding as the New York City region winners of DRI Round 8.

The Governor's Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is a New York State grant program that invests in downtown economic development. After submitting a winning application, the Greater Morris Park community will work with the State to develop a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) that identifies community priority projects that could benefit from DRI funding and help achieve the local community's vision for its downtown. A call for project submissions to be funded by the \$20M grant will be released shortly.



www.gmpdri.com

Public Engagement Strategies & Opportunities in GMP

How can we reach a wider audience? How can the LPC help?

What outreach methods and messaging have worked in the past?

- **Website:** www.gmpdri.com + QR Code for website
- **Promotions channels:** newsletters, promotional materials for email circulars, social media, others?
- **Languages:** English, Spanish, Arabic, and Albanian. Others?
- **Paper medium:** flyers, others?

Public Engagement Strategies & Opportunities in GMP

Where are the most popular neighborhood events coming up?

Where can we host public events?

Events

- 2025/05/18: Bronx CB 11 Health Fair
- 2025/05/20: NYC Health + Hospitals Annual Public Meeting
- Others?

Venues

- Residence Inn: Metro Center Atrium
- Jacobi Hospital Conference Room
- Bronx Muslim Center
- Lubin Dining Hall, Montefiore School of Medicine
- Others?

Agenda

04 Visioning

- Feedback on Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities

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Strengths

What makes Greater Morris Park unique that should be preserved and improved upon?

What We've Heard

- Morris Park is the borough's second-largest job center (this is the largest according to DCP)
- Diverse mix of local restaurants and services along Morris Park Ave, White Plains Rd, and Westchester Square
- Montefiore, and Hutchinson Metro Center, are investing in major growth plans and public realm improvements

LPC Feedback

- Education and life sciences are important economic sectors in this area.
- Arts and culture including places to co-create and marketplace for artists and makers are needed.
- We need to celebrate the history and identity of Greater Morris Park. Race Course is a part of that history. Van Nest is one of the oldest areas with deep historical roots – developed in 1800s. Morris Park and race tracks were built 20 years later.
- The area has a rich diversity of the cultures and communities. It is a place of opportunity for all cultures and people and is evolving.

Challenges

What are the greatest challenges holding back economic activity and quality of life?

What We've Heard

- Key corridors lack an inviting pedestrian experience, with cracked sidewalks, inactive street frontages, and insufficient lighting
- There are few public gathering places in the area

LPC Feedback

- Key commercial corridors / nodes are: White Plains Road, Morris Park Avenue, Westchester Sq.
- Neighborhoods are independent of the nodes / place of activity and do not promote walkability. How can we promote walkability and mobility outside of cars?
- There are no trees and we need more inviting pedestrian connections and environments.
- Sidewalks and streets need to be safer for all, especially with new forms of micro-mobility.
- It is important to connect to new metro north stations and other stations.
- People park in this area from Friday night to Sunday.

Opportunities

What are the greatest opportunities for the economic revitalization of Greater Morris Park?

What We've Heard

- Ensure that local businesses and entrepreneurs can also participate in the area's growth
- Investment in micro-mobility options (such as e-scooters and bike share) alongside new stations could better connect neighborhoods
- Corridors could benefit from stronger representation of their histories and cultural identities

LPC Feedback

- We need beautification throughout the DRI area: Murals, Signage, Public Art, Art Installations (e.g. Flatiron Building), and Places where the community can engage.
- Multicultural aspect of living together with different groups should be celebrated in the public places.
- Store façades need some uniformity so that the entire commercial corridor can have an identity. E.g. canopy as a unifying element as in some municipalities in Westchester.
- People need more spaces for family time > playgrounds, community spaces, parks.

10 years from now

How do you envision Greater Morris Park 10 years from now?

LPC Feedback

We envision Greater Morris Park...

- With more public art and opportunities for education through art.
- With safe and inviting streetscapes that promote walking especially around and from the existing and new train stations.
- With better connections for residents and visitors to the BIDs from the new and existing train stations. With better connections from Einstein Medical College and the new hotels to the areas “main streets” / commercial corridors / nodes of activity.
- With more green space and outdoor space where people can gather.

Developing Community Vision and Goals: **Next Steps**

We will continue to collect and synthesize feedback from LPC and the community to formulate **Vision, Goals and Strategies** for GMP.

These will **guide your prioritization of projects** for funding.

Agenda

05 Next Steps

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Next Steps

The LPC should:

- Sign Code of Conduct
- Reach out to Community Members
- Spread the Word about Open Call for Projects
- Visit & Share GMP DRI Website
- Participate in Consultant Interviews

Consultants will:

- Reach out to LPC to set up small groups interviews
- Plan Public Workshop #1 and Local Outreach Event #1
- Begin Drafting of Downtown Profile
- Launch Open Call for Projects

Agenda

06 Public Comments

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Thank You!

Visit:

www.gmpdri.com for
more information

Contact us at:

gmpdri2025@gmail.com

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