



Department of State
Planning, Development
& Community Infrastructure

NY FORWARD – CHESTERFIELD & AUSABLE SPOTLIGHT

KYLIE PECK | NYS Department of State
CLAYTON BARBER | Town of Chesterfield
TIM BRESETT | Town of Ausable

MAY 5, 2026

AGENDA

1. NY Forward program
2. How Are Communities Selected?
3. The Planning Process
4. Chesterfield & Ausable Spotlight – Keeseville NY Forward

NY FORWARD PROGRAM

WHAT ARE THE NY FORWARD + DRI PROGRAMS?

The NY Forward and Downtown Revitalization Initiative programs focus on creating healthy, vibrant, walkable downtowns that catalyze sustainable economic development and accrue numerous economic, social, and environmental benefits to the locality, the region, and the State as a whole.

NY FORWARD

The NY Forward program...

- Is intended to invigorate and enliven downtowns that are smaller or more rural than their surrounding region
- Focuses on hamlets, villages, and neighborhood-scale municipal centers
- Created so all communities can benefit from the State's revitalization efforts, regardless of size, character, needs and challenges.
- Will attract more businesses, residents, and visitors, while also providing a higher quality of life for residents to these smaller downtown



\$100 million per round

- Two \$4.5 million awards in each REDC region.
*Not applicable to NYC

NY FORWARD

Community Characteristics

- Smaller, walkable, less dense geographical areas with amenities that serve the immediate local community
- More vehicle dependent; patrons mainly arrive by car
- Predominantly service-oriented businesses and employment opportunities. Services may include maintaining employment and job growth
- Small-town charm – with heritage, antiques, cottage, agriculture and other niche based tourism.
- Vehicle dependent with limited public transportation potential. Residential or rural agricultural centric development
- Lower-density: most buildings are two to four stories; buildings contain a few uses and tenants; there is lesser square footage of built space per acre
- Two to four story buildings with opportunities for upper story housing



NY FORWARD

Community Selection and Funding

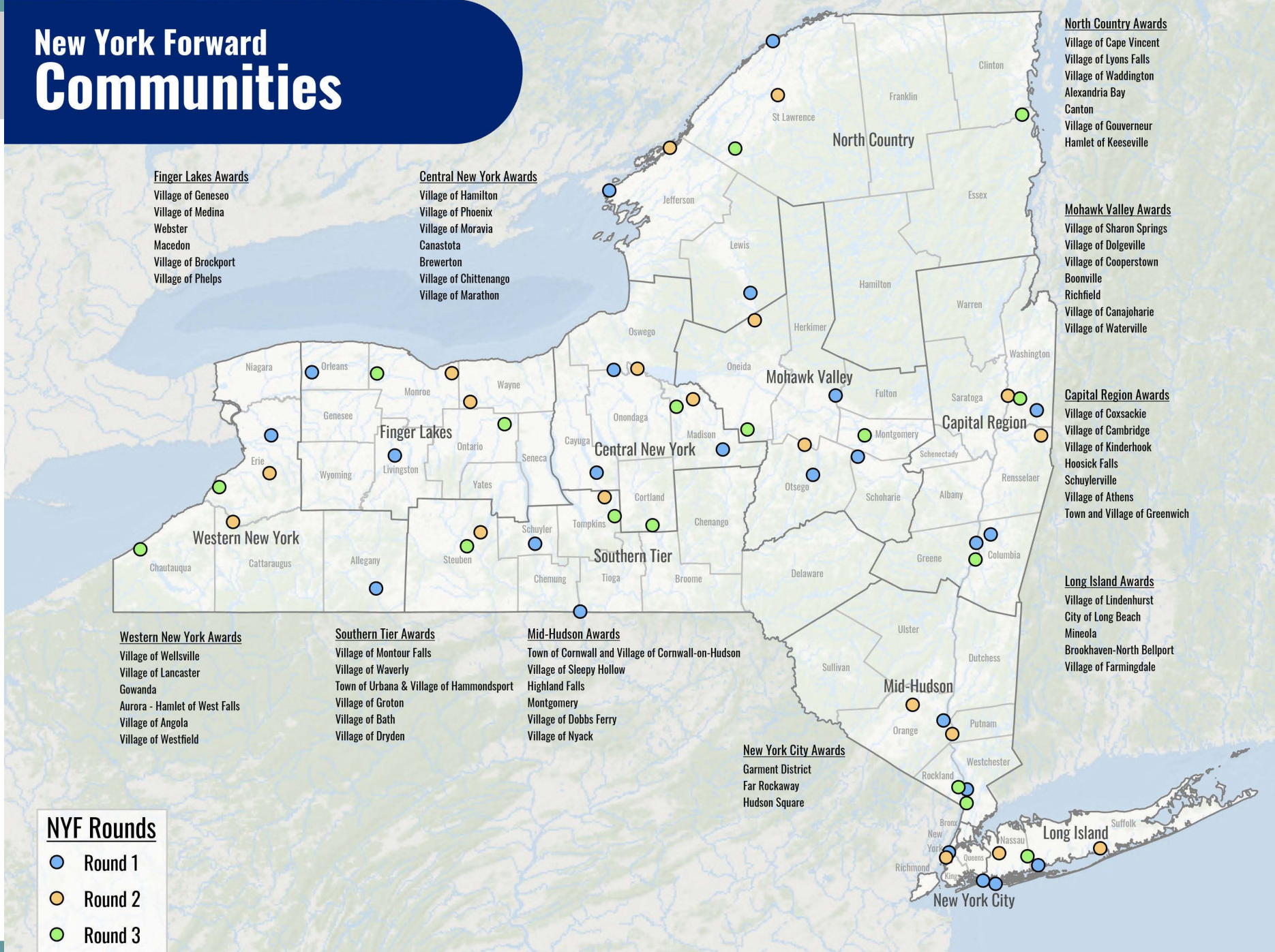
- Two \$4.5M awards per region **not including NYC region**
- Funds used for pre-application technical assistance, capacity building webinars, and private consultant teams used through the planning phase are not deducted from community awards
- REDCs recommend communities based on application process

Potential Projects

- Smaller projects focused more on building renovation, adaptive reuse, redevelopment, or activation of upper-stories (ex: housing, additional commercial) rather than new construction; enhancements of existing public spaces
- Projects that elevate specific cultural, historical qualities that enhance the feeling of local charm
- Tight commercial activity area with opportunity to enhance cultural heritage through signage or historic markers



New York Forward Communities



Finger Lakes Awards

- Village of Genesee
- Village of Medina
- Webster
- Macedon
- Village of Brockport
- Village of Phelps

Central New York Awards

- Village of Hamilton
- Village of Phoenix
- Village of Moravia
- Canastota
- Brewerton
- Village of Chittenango
- Village of Marathon

North Country Awards

- Village of Cape Vincent
- Village of Lyons Falls
- Village of Waddington
- Alexandria Bay
- Canton
- Village of Gouverneur
- Hamlet of Keeseville

Mohawk Valley Awards

- Village of Sharon Springs
- Village of Dolgeville
- Village of Cooperstown
- Boonville
- Richfield
- Village of Canajoharie
- Village of Waterville

Capital Region Awards

- Village of Coxsackie
- Village of Cambridge
- Village of Kinderhook
- Hoosick Falls
- Schuylerville
- Village of Athens
- Town and Village of Greenwich

Long Island Awards

- Village of Lindenhurst
- City of Long Beach
- Mineola
- Brookhaven-North Bellport
- Village of Farmingdale

Western New York Awards

- Village of Wellsville
- Village of Lancaster
- Gowanda
- Aurora - Hamlet of West Falls
- Village of Angola
- Village of Westfield

Southern Tier Awards

- Village of Montour Falls
- Village of Waverly
- Town of Urbana & Village of Hammondport
- Village of Groton
- Village of Bath
- Village of Dryden

Mid-Hudson Awards

- Town of Cornwall and Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson
- Village of Sleepy Hollow
- Highland Falls
- Montgomery
- Village of Dobbs Ferry
- Village of Nyack

New York City Awards

- Garment District
- Far Rockaway
- Hudson Square

NYF Rounds

- Round 1
- Round 2
- Round 3

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE (DRI)

The DRI program...

- Transforms downtown neighborhoods into vibrant centers that offer a high quality of life and become magnets for redevelopment, business growth, job creation, and economic and housing diversity
- Larger, walkable, more dense geographical areas with amenities that serve the regional community
- REDCs recommend communities based on application process
- A portion of funds from each regional award are used for professional consulting services through the planning phase
- Has invested over \$1 billion in communities across the State



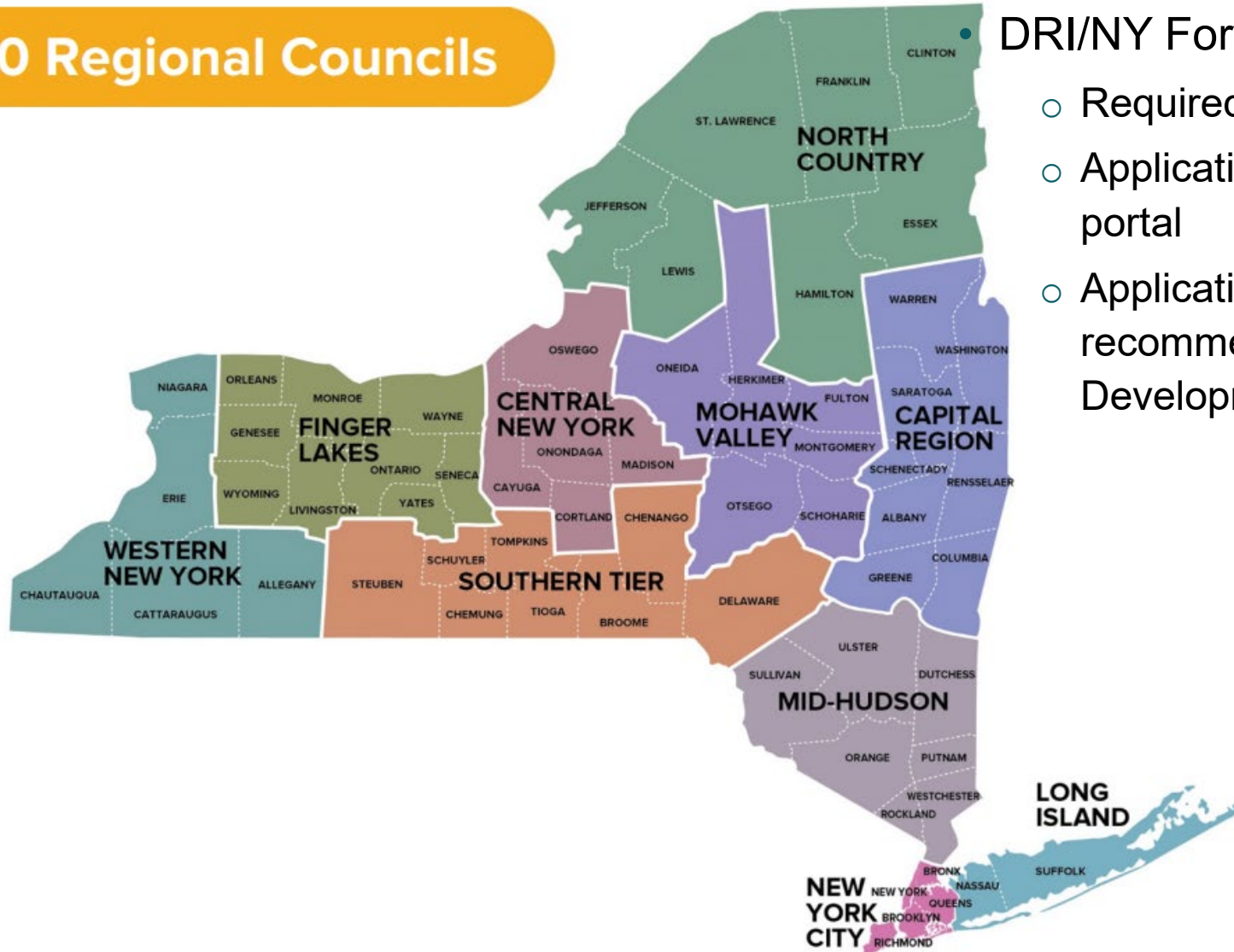
\$100 million per round

- \$10 million award to 9 REDC regions
- \$20 million award in NYC region

HOW ARE COMMUNITIES SELECTED?

HOW ARE COMMUNITIES SELECTED?

10 Regional Councils



- DRI/NY Forward application process
 - Required certified Pro-housing Community status
 - Applications are submitted through online CFA portal
 - Applications are reviewed and communities are recommended by each Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) region

HOW ARE COMMUNITIES SELECTED?

- The 11 components in an application are as follows:

1. Application Cover Page.
2. Geographic Area and Justification. Clearly define the proposed DRI and/or NY Forward area and explain why the area is ready for the DRI/NY Forward investment and how that investment would serve as a catalyst for revitalization.
3. Vision Statement. Provide a brief statement of the municipality's vision for downtown revitalization.
4. Past Investment and Future Potential. Describe how the DRI and/or NY Forward area will leverage prior private and public investment and catalyze future investments.
5. Recent or Impending Job Growth. Describe how recent job growth will leverage the DRI and/or NY Forward investment.
6. Quality of Life. Describe the defining characteristics of the DRI and/or NY Forward area that make it a desirable place to live, work, and visit.
7. Supportive Local Policies. Describe any local policies in place that increase quality of life and advance the State's decarbonization goals.
8. Public Support. Describe public participation in the development of the DRI and/or NY Forward application and recent past engagement, including how these engagement efforts shaped the downtown vision statement and the project list.
9. <u>Transformative Project Opportunities.</u> Identify and describe project opportunities that build on the community's strengths and needs and have the potential to be transformative in the DRI and/or NY Forward area.
10. Administrative Capacity. Describe the municipality's capacity to oversee implementation and ensure the long-term success of projects.
11. Letters of Support (optional). Document the support of local leaders, stakeholders, and organizations.



NY Forward

NY FORWARD PLANNING PROCESS

DRI + NY FORWARD GOALS



**Create an active
downtown**



**Attract new
businesses and provide
job opportunities**



**Enhance public spaces
that serve those of all
ages and abilities**



**Cultivate a variety of
housing
opportunities**



**Provide quality of life
amenities**



**Grow local tax
revenue**



**Reduce greenhouse
gas emissions +
enhance climate
resiliency**

PLANNING PROCESS



Visioning

Refine the community's future vision, establish priorities and gather input



Opportunities + Challenges

Understand the community's unique characteristics and key opportunities



Project Development + Evaluation

Identify, develop, and evaluate potential projects



Project Recommendations

Recommend projects that align with the community's goals

9 Month Timeframe (April – December)

- Each community is led by a consultant team who guides the planning process, works with sponsors to develop projects to recommend to the State, and documents the process/projects in the Strategic Investment Plan
- This process helps ensure all voices are heard and projects are carefully considered.
- Projects are solicited through an Open Call for Projects process. The Local planning Committee recommends projects for funding consideration

WHO IS INVOLVED WITH THE PLANNING?

Local Planning
Committee

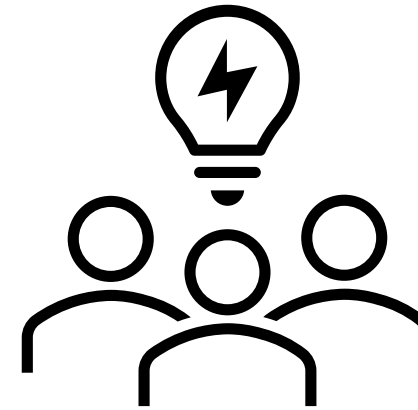
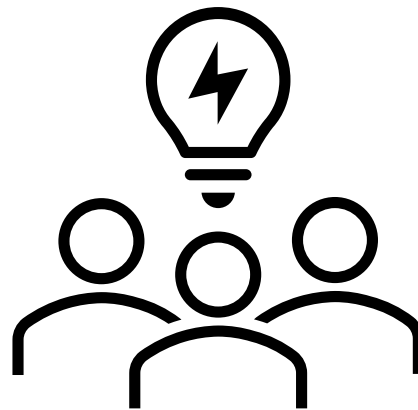
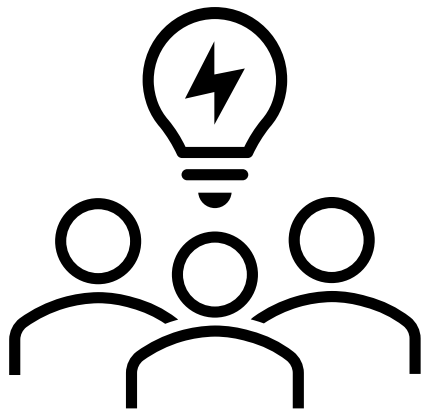
State Team

Consultant Team

Municipal Staff

Project Sponsors

Community



ELIGIBLE PROJECT TYPES



Public Improvement Projects

Streetscape and transportation improvements, recreational trails, new and upgraded parks, plazas, public art, green infrastructure, and other public realm projects.



New Development and/or Rehabilitation of Existing Downtown Buildings

Development and redevelopment of real property for mixed-use, commercial, residential, not for profit, or public uses. Development / redevelopment should result in employment opportunities, housing choices or other community services.



Small Project Grant Fund

A locally managed matching small project fund (up to \$600,000) for small downtown projects, such as façade improvements, building renovations, business assistance, or public art.

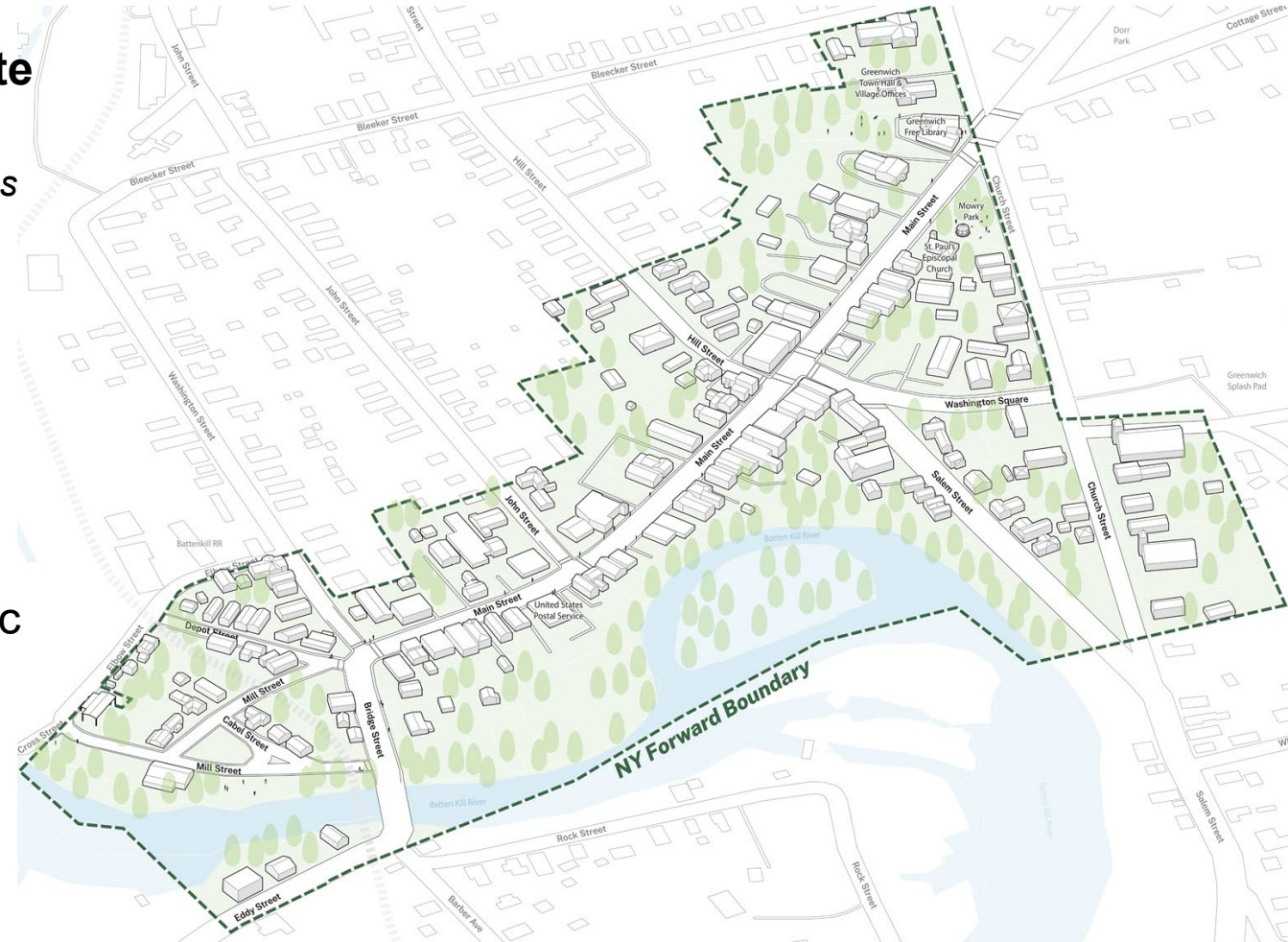


Branding and Marketing

Downtown branding and marketing projects that target residents, tourists, investors, developers and visitors.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- Required 25% minimum project match for **private projects** * *Proposed projects with a greater sponsor match may be more competitive during the project evaluation process*
- No match required for **public or non-profit projects**
- LPC can set higher match requirements at their own discretion
- Final slate of projects included in the final place takes into consideration feedback from the public and is finalized by the LPC
- The total amount of requested DRI / NY Forward funds will have a higher dollar amount than what will be awarded
 - \$12 - \$15 million for DRI
 - \$6 - \$8 million for NY Forward



WHAT IS THE END GOAL OF THE PLANNING PROCESS?

- **Creation and submission of the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) to NYS**
 - Local Planning Committee consensus on a recommended list of projects for funding consideration
- Momentum and direction for future downtown/community revitalization



WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE PLANNING PROCESS IS OVER?

State Agencies
Evaluate
Recommended
Projects



Funding
Announcements
are made by
NYS



Contracts are
executed between
State Agencies and
Project Sponsors



Project
Implementation
and Reporting



- Municipal
- Non-profit



- Private
- Non-profit



- Non-profit
- Small Project Funds

WHAT THE AWARD IS vs IS NOT...

- Both the NY Forward and DRI programs include an approximate 9-month planning process led by a professional planning and regional State team to develop a Strategic Investment Plan that will include a list of projects recommended by the Local Planning Committee for funding consideration. **NYS makes the final decision on which projects will be awarded funding.**

WHAT THE DRI/NY FORWARD AWARD IS vs. IS NOT



It IS a Reimbursement Program

Project sponsors must first incur expenses and complete project milestones before being reimbursed by the State after meeting specific contract requirements.

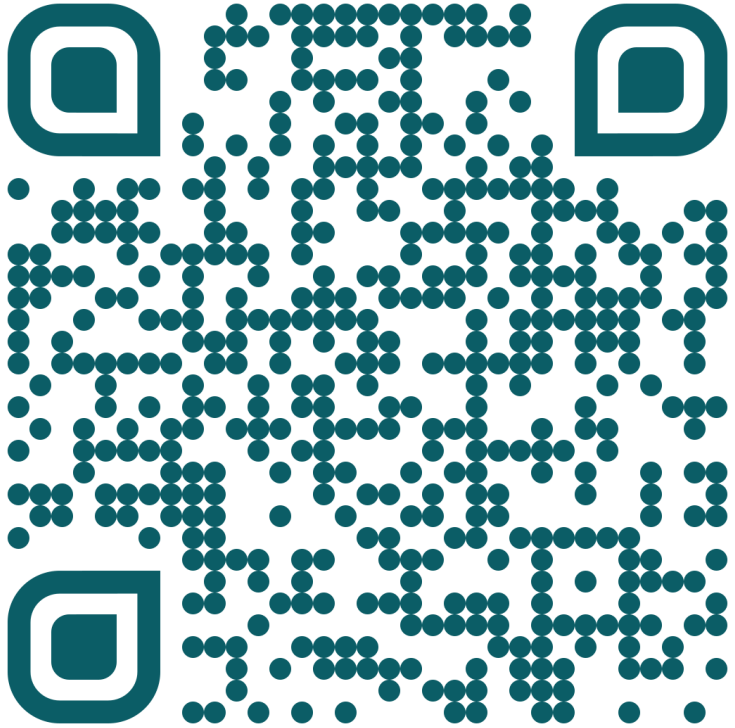


It IS NOT a Lump Sum Payment

Awarded funding is not deposited into a community's general fund to be distributed at will. It is a commitment of State funds for downtown revitalization projects within the identified downtown boundary. Projects will be considered for funding through an open call for projects during the planning process.

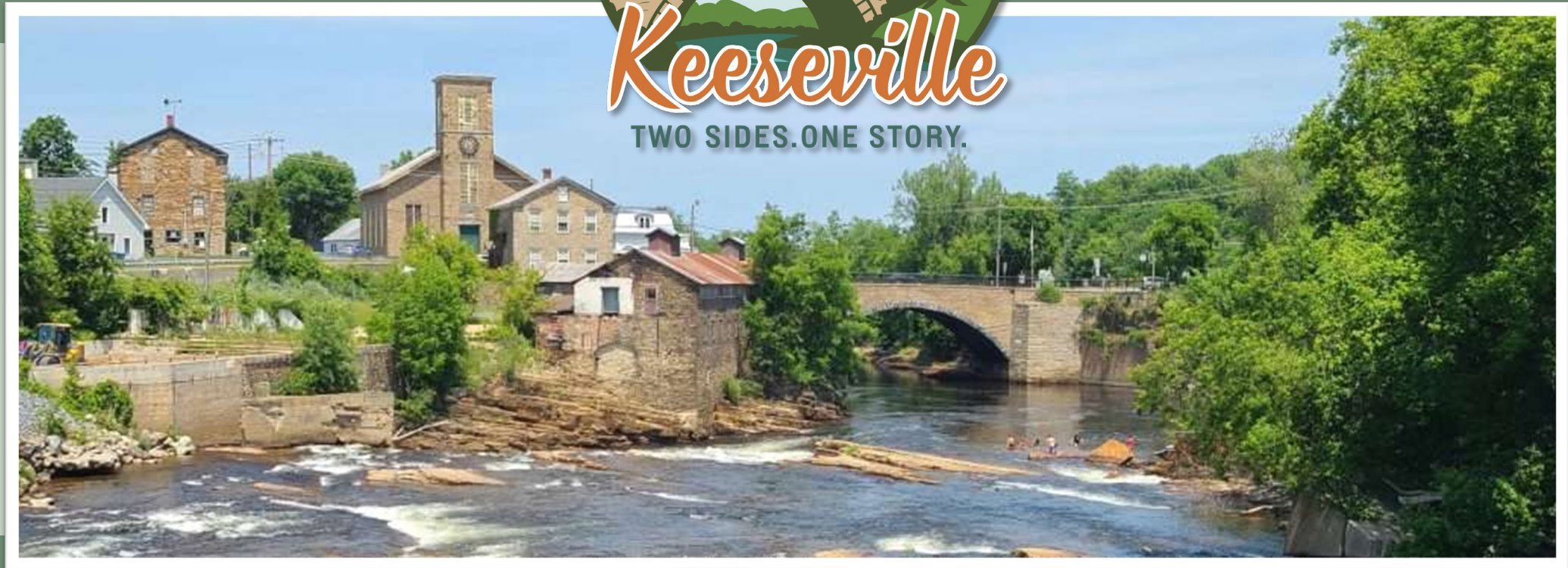
Focused on Capital Transformation: Funds are designated for projects like building renovations, streetscapes, and parks rather than operations or maintenance.

TO LEARN MORE OR TO GET STARTED...



- Connect with Empire State Development (ESD) or Department of State (DOS) to learn more or to schedule a meeting:
 - Steve Hunt: stephen.hunt@esd.ny.gov
 - Kylie Peck: kylie.peck@dos.ny.gov
 - Jennifer Voss: jennifer.voss@dos.ny.gov
- Review the current guidebook on the NYS website: www.ny.gov/programs/ny-forward
- Capacity Building Webinars available on NYS website!
www.ny.gov/ny-forward/capacity-building-webinars

NY FORWARD SPOTLIGHT | CHESTERFIELD & AUSABLE



KEESEVILLE NY FORWARD APPLICATION SUBMISSION



- Town collaboration
- Application committee
- Preparing the application
- Choosing project boundary
- Public outreach and support
- Finding potential projects to include

**TWO TOWNS
TWO COUNTIES
one community**

CONTACT:
Diana Zais, Chair
Keeseville Forward Committee
dzais91@gmail.com



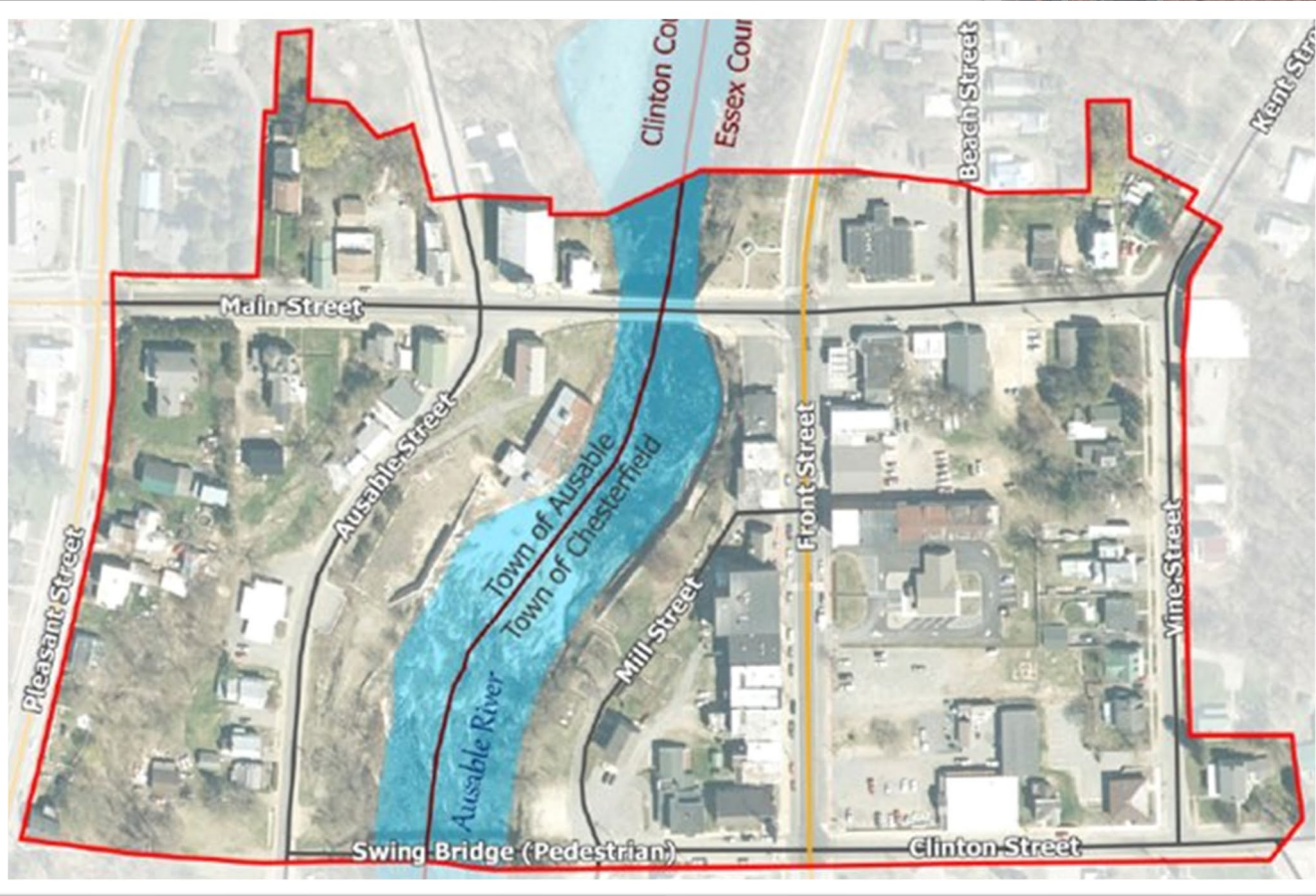
Clayton Barber, Supervisor
Town of Chesterfield
Certified Pro-Housing Community



Tim Bresett, Supervisor
Town of Ausable
Certified Pro-Housing Community

Essex & Clinton Counties

KEESEVILLE WINS NY FORWARD ROUND 3!



KEESEVILLE NY FORWARD PLANNING - May 29 – October 2, 2025



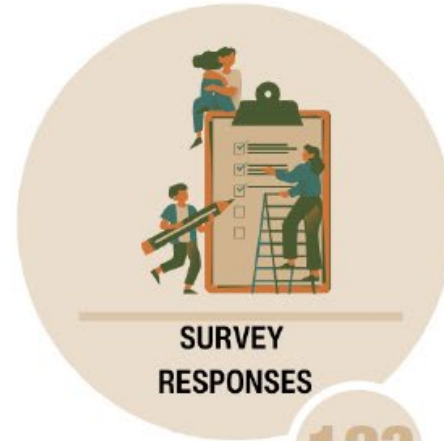
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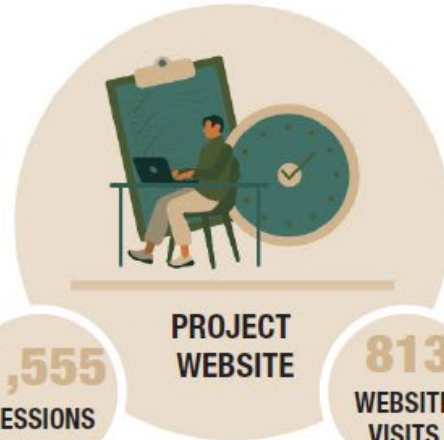
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6



10



1,555 SESSIONS

813 WEBSITE VISITS

KEESEVILLE NY FORWARD PLANNING



NEW YORK STATE NY Forward

NY FORWARD PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

JOIN THE REVITALIZATION OF DOWNTOWN KEESEVILLE!



Don't Miss These Upcoming Keeseville NY Forward Activities!

-  **Open House #1: May 29, 2025**
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM
Keeseville Flks Lodge #2072
1 Elk Street
Drop in and share your ideas!
-  **Coffee**
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM
Village Hall
1725 F Street
Come and share your ideas!




OPEN CALL FOR PROJECTS NOW LIVE

Transform downtown Keeseville with NY Forward!

To learn more about NY Forward, project eligibility requirements and to access an official Call for Projects Application form, visit [KeesevilleNYForward.com](https://www.KeesevilleNYForward.com) or scan the QR code below.

ACCEPTING PROJECT PROPOSALS UNTIL JULY 25, 2025 AT 12:00PM




LOCAL PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED PROJECTS



1 Establish a Downtown Keeseville Pedestrian Loop with Streetscape Improvements

The Downtown Keeseville Pedestrian Loop & Streetscape project will implement cohesive and accessible streetscaping improvements along Ausable, Clinton, Mill, Front, and Main Streets. The improvements will create a connected and attractive downtown that encourages exploration and supports local businesses. Key improvements include accessible sidewalks, street trees, lighting, and gathering spaces. Pedestrian gateways at major entry points will welcome visitors and strengthen the identity of downtown Keeseville.

Total Project Cost: \$2,382,000

NYF FUNDING REQUEST: \$2,382,000



2 Enhance the Keeseville Waterfront Park by Creating a Scenic Overlook

The Keeseville Waterfront Park Overlook project will construct a new, publicly accessible deck at the site of the former Red Mill foundation, offering a scenic and peaceful space to enjoy views of the Ausable River. Amenities such as benches, planters, and a shaded shelter will make the overlook inviting and accessible for all. Enhanced landscaping will tie together the existing park improvements and create a cohesive park space.

Total Project Cost: \$1,530,000

NYF FUNDING REQUEST: \$1,530,000

LOCAL PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED PROJECTS



3 Transform the Old Stone Mill into a Multi-Use Facility

The Old Stone Mill will transform into a dynamic, multi-use facility that can accommodate community events with venue space and a commercial kitchen. The lower level will be a flexible space for commercial, office, or studio space. Building improvements include structural stabilization, building repairs, new mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, buildout of the upper-floor, fit-out of the lower level, ADA access, and energy efficiency measures.

Total Project Cost: \$7,000,000

NYF FUNDING REQUEST: \$2,100,000



4 Convert the Former Masonic Lodge into Loft Apartments

The adaptive reuse of the Masonic Lodge will convert the vacant structure into six (6) loft-style apartments, while retaining its historic character. Project improvements include complete interior renovation, installation of new mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, restoration and weatherproofing, structural stabilization, bringing the building up to code and ADA compliance.

Total Project Cost: \$2,250,000

NYF FUNDING REQUEST: \$675,000

LOCAL PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED PROJECTS



5 Establish a Small Project Fund in Keeseville

The project will establish a locally managed matching fund to undertake a range of smaller downtown projects including facade enhancements, interior and exterior building renovations for commercial or mixed-use spaces, business assistance, public art, permanently affixed signage and awnings and commercial interior fit-out- HVAC, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing. Applications to this small projects fund will be required to provide a minimum of 25% of the overall project cost as a matching contribution, leveraging private funds to achieve an even greater transformative impact in downtown Keeseville.

Total Project Cost: \$195,000

NYF FUNDING REQUEST: \$150,000



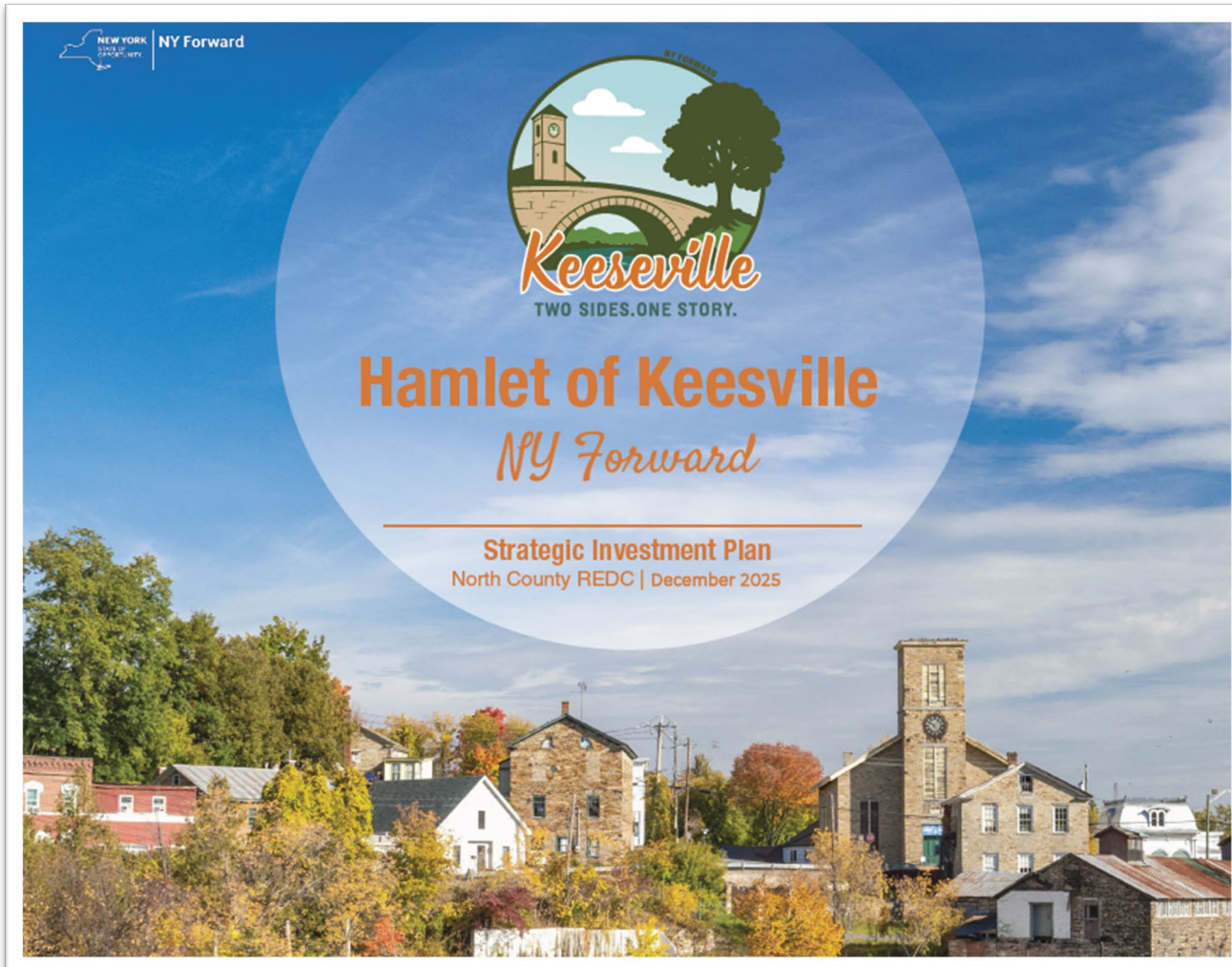
6 Create a Branding and Wayfinding Initiative for Downtown Keeseville

The Keeseville branding and wayfinding initiative will develop a branding strategy designed to enhance the visibility and appeal of downtown Keeseville as a destination and distinct place in the region. The wayfinding signage will utilize the branding strategy to enhance access to, and user experience of, Keeseville's downtown by highlighting its assets.

Total Project Cost: \$250,000

NYF FUNDING REQUEST: \$250,000

KEESEVILLE NY FORWARD NEXT STEPS



- Strategic Investment Plan was submitted to NYS in December 2025
- Project announcements – Spring 2026
- Contracts to be executed between State Agencies and project sponsors – Late Summer 2026 – Spring 2027
- Project implementation 2 – 5 years

THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?