**New York Forward Round 2 Guidance and Information for Potential Project Sponsors**

Relevant Guidance from 2023 New York Forward Application (full guidance: <https://www.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/DRI-NY-Forward_Application_2023_FINAL.pdf>):

**Page 14: Eligible Project Types**

**New Development and/or Rehabilitation of Existing Downtown Buildings**

Projects in this category may include **development or redevelopment of real property for mixed-use, commercial, residential, not-for profit, or public uses**. They should have **a visible and functional impact on the downtown serving as anchor, catalytic or transformative projects** that will provide **employment opportunities, housing choices, and/or services for the community**. Proposals to construct or rehabilitate parking facilities will only be considered if they directly support new development in the downtown area.

**Page 15: Project Requirements**

The DRI and NYF programs are designed to fund transformational projects that have the potential to create an immediate, positive effect on a community’s downtown. Projects identified in a DRI or NYF application should meet the following criteria:

**Project Sponsors**: DRI/NYF funding awards may be awarded to **public, not-for-profit, and private entities** to implement projects selected for funding. Project sponsors must have the **capacity and legal authority to undertake** the proposed project.

**Timing:** Projects must be able to break ground within **two years or sooner** of receiving DRI/NYF grant funds.

**Matching and Leverage:** New York communities are diverse. To meet the opportunities and challenges throughout the State, there are no programmatic minimum match requirements for the DRI or NYF. However, **the LPC may impose match requirements as part of the planning process**.

**Building Decarbonization:** For the DRI and NYF program, projects that represent **new construction or building addition (over 5,000 SF) and substantial rehabilitation (over 5,000 SF and meeting at least two other renovation criteria) will be required to demonstrate compliance with one of the three compliance path options**: meeting the NY Stretch Energy Code, obtaining an Energy Start score of 90 or greater using the EPA Target Finder Tool, or obtaining a certification from an approve third-party organization such as LEED. Energy consultants will be available to support project sponsors in meeting this requirement.

**Project Size and Scale:** Projects must be **large enough to be truly transformative** for the downtown area.

**Financing:** Projects should have **financing commitments largely secured or be able to demonstrate a clear path to securing sufficient financing**. This financing, combined with DRI/NYF funding, should enable the sponsor to undertake the project expeditiously.

**Site Control:** The project sponsor **must have site control or be in the process of acquiring site control.** If the project sponsor is leasing or renting the proposed project site, the property owner must agree to the proposed project in writing.

**Ineligible Activities**

There are few restrictions on the use of DRI/NYF funds other than the requirement that proposed projects are largely capital in nature, can be implemented quickly, and will have a transformational impact on the downtown. However, a few specific activities have been identified as ineligible for DRI/NYF funds and should not be included in projects proposed for DRI /NYF funding. These ineligible activities include: **Planning Activities, Operations and Maintenance** (staff salaries and wages, rent, utilities, upkeep)**, Pre-award Costs, Property Acquisition** (can be included in overall budget, but cannot be funded with NYF funds), and **Training and Program Expenses.**

**Page 28: Application Part 9 – Transformative Project Opportunities**

*Identify and describe project opportunities that build on the community’s strengths and needs and have the potential to be transformative in the DRI or NYF area.*

Please describe a complementary set of proposed projects or opportunities in the DRI or NYF area that have **strong public support**, are **poised for implementation**, and when considered together, would have a **transformative effect on the community’s downtown**. Projects may be developed to varying degrees and applicants are also encouraged to include transformative opportunities that could be explored further during the planning process. Please identify multiple project opportunities, and the following applies to each project or opportunity identified in the application:

• Projects must be **realistic, feasible**, and have been **coordinated** with property owners / project sponsors

• Projects may be sponsored by **public, nonprofit, or private entities** and may address **economic development, transportation, housing, and community development needs**

• Projects should be **ready for implementation** with an infusion of DRI / NYF funds within the **first one or two years** (depending on the scope and complexity of the project)

• Project descriptions should include the **location, identification of a project sponsor, a tentative timeline for implementation, and a proposed cost and identification of potential funding sources**

While DRI and NYF funding awards may be used to cover a portion of costs for both public and private projects**, leveraged investment from other funding sources (private or public) will stretch the DRI/NYF award, allowing more projects to benefit.** This, in turn, will broaden the impact to the community by funding a more inclusive and representative slate of projects leading to increased community revitalization, economic activity, community amenities, and quality of life.

**Additional information**

-The final due date of the application is **Friday, September 29.** We ask that you send us your information by **Friday, September 15.** The more detailed and specific information you provide, the more likely it is for your project to be selected for inclusion.

-This is a matching grant program. NYF funding will not fund the entirety of the project. Owners/project sponsors will be expected to contribute **a certain percentage, expected to be close to 60%,** of program funding, though the exact number is subject to change.

-It is important to keep in mind that only a few projects can be included in the final application and that the New York Forward program is highly competitive, with a maximum of **three** municipalities from each of New York’s **ten** regions projected to receive funding.

-Example (heavily simplified) proposed transformative projects from Round 1 NYF applications have included:

* Expanding restaurant space to include a brewery and enclosed pavilion for additional seating and event space; estimated cost **$150,000**
* Making various repairs, exterior improvements, and replacements for building containing 6 residential and 3 commercial units; estimated cost **$200,000**
* Creating additional customer parking area, warehouse, and outdoor patio and seating space at brewery; estimated cost **$500,000**
* Making aesthetic improvements and repairs to brick, roof, HVAC, water system, parking lot, and driveway of historic inn; estimated cost **$400,000**
* Making parking and drainage improvements to several buildings on a main street; estimated cost **$82,000**

-Contact Emily Honen of MRB Group at ehonen@mrbgroup.com or 518-650-2261 with any additional questions.

# Project Profile Template

Enter your information next to each prompt, below, and delete the instructions. Example:

**Project name: Adaptive reuse of bank building**

**~~(Title of project, no more than eight words. Ex. “Renovation of 18 Main Street”, “Streetscape Enhancements”, “Brewery and Restaurant on Oak Street”)~~**

**Project name:**

**(Title of project, no more than eight words. Ex. “Renovation of 18 Main Street”, “Streetscape Enhancements”, “Brewery and Restaurant on Oak Street”)**

**Project location:**

**(Street address or addresses.)**

**Project sponsor:**

**(Name(s) of individuals, companies, and partners. Specify the lead entity.)**

**Project timeline: [Enter your info here]**

**(Start date, interim completion phases, anticipated project completion.)**

**Project costs: [Enter your info here]**

**(Total project costs, broken into hard, soft, site, acquisition, other)**

**Potential funding sources and amounts: [Enter your info here]**

**(List the amount and source of all funds. Include all sources, including loans, equity, NY Forward and other grants, etc. For private, for-profit projects, sponsors should expect to contribute around 60% of total project costs. Acquisition costs are not eligible for NYF funding, but can be included in the overall budget.)**

**Project images (minimum of 2 images, see below):**

**(Attach at least two images – one photo of the current site/building and one image representing the project as complete. The as-complete image can be a drawing, rendering, floorplan, site plan or other design illustration or it can be an image of an example project that is similar to the one being proposed.)**

**Project Narrative:**

**(Please provide a concise, general description of the proposed project (two-paragraph maximum).**

**Describe the public support for the project**:

**(One or two sentences. Examples of demonstrated public support include the project being contained within prior planning documents such as comprehensive plans, strategic plans, or other strategic documents that were developed with a community engagement process.)**

**Describe the project’s readiness:**

**(Two or three sentences. NY Forward prioritizes projects that are in a high state of readiness. Does the sponsor already have site control? Has the project gone through planning, design, permitting, etc.? Are the funds for the project already committed/secured or are they pending?)**

**Please describe how the project will contribute to broader community impact:**

**(Two sentences. Describe the public benefit that would result from the project.)**