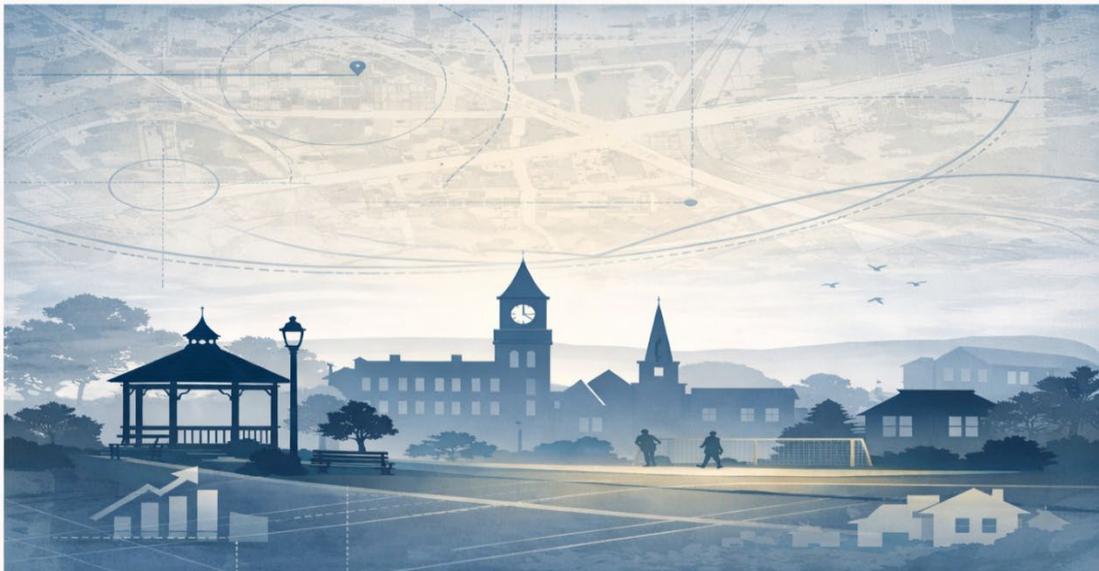




2026 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE (DRI) PROJECT STATUS REPORT

Prepared for the Oneida Common Council



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Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Program Overview

The City of Oneida was awarded **\$10 million through New York State’s Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) in December 2021**. The DRI program is a competitive statewide initiative intended to help communities strengthen their downtown districts through targeted investments in infrastructure, public spaces, housing, economic development, and support for local businesses.

Following the award, the City participated in a state-guided planning process that resulted in the development of the **Oneida Strategic Investment Plan (SIP)**. This planning effort involved a Local Planning Committee composed of community stakeholders, along with public engagement events, stakeholder interviews, and community participation opportunities. The SIP identified eight priority projects designed to support long-term revitalization of the downtown district.

After approval of the Strategic Investment Plan, each project entered the **implementation phase**, which requires separate contracts with New York State agencies, consultant procurement, engineering and design work, environmental review, property coordination, and ongoing project management. As a result, implementation of DRI projects typically occurs over several years following the initial award.

Over several recent budget cycles, the City experienced staffing reductions and organizational restructuring that affected administrative capacity in multiple departments, including planning and development. As part of those changes, the City consolidated the former **City Planner** and **Development Director** positions into a single role, now titled **Director of Planning & Development**, in order to maintain essential planning, zoning, and economic development functions while operating within reduced staffing levels.

These staffing adjustments were the result of fiscal policy decisions made over a number of years as the City worked to manage budget pressures and tax constraints. While those decisions addressed financial considerations, they also reduced the City’s internal administrative capacity to coordinate complex initiatives such as the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and other long-term planning efforts.

I began serving as **Director of Planning & Development in September 2025**, following a period in which the position had remained vacant for approximately one year. At that time, several DRI projects had not advanced beyond early planning or procurement stages and required renewed coordination with consultants, state agencies, and project partners.

Since September 2025, the Planning Department has focused on stabilizing and advancing the City’s DRI portfolio while also restoring regular operations of the Planning Commission / Zoning Board of Appeals and providing administrative support to the Codes Department during a period of staffing transition.

Over the past several months the City has:

- Executed the consultant contract for the Comprehensive Plan and Form-Based Code update
- Advanced engineering and design coordination for the Downtown Streetscape, Veterans Memorial Park, and AYSO Soccer Fields projects
- Continued administration of the Downtown Business Assistance Fund in coordination with MRB Group
- Re-established regular coordination with the New York State Department of State and other project partners
- Restarted regular meetings of the Planning Commission / Zoning Board of Appeals, which had not convened since May 2025
- Begun pursuing supplemental grant funding opportunities to expand the impact of DRI infrastructure investments

As a result of these efforts, **all eight DRI projects are now active and moving forward within the implementation phase of the program.**

While the DRI award itself dates back several years, the administrative structure responsible for coordinating these projects has only recently been reestablished. The City recognizes that residents may perceive that these projects have been underway for an extended period of time. However, much of the active implementation work currently underway has occurred within the past several months as administrative coordination and project management capacity has been restored and the City works to move these projects forward in a coordinated and organized manner.

The following sections provide project-by-project updates outlining the purpose, current status, challenges affecting progress, and anticipated next steps for each DRI initiative.

Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Program Implementation Timeline

December 2021

City of Oneida awarded \$10 million through NYS Downtown Revitalization Initiative

2022

Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) developed through state-guided planning process

Local Planning Committee established

Eight priority revitalization projects identified

2023 – 2024

Projects move into implementation phase

State contracts executed

Early engineering, consultant procurement, and project coordination begins

September 2025

Director of Planning & Development position filled after approximately one year vacancy

Administrative coordination of DRI projects reestablished

Fall 2025 – Present

- Engineering coordination underway for Streetscape, Veterans Park, and Soccer Fields
- Comprehensive Plan and Form-Based Code consultant contract executed
- DRI coordination reestablished with NYS Department of State
- Planning Commission / Zoning Board meetings restarted
- Supplemental grant funding pursued to leverage DRI investments

2026

Multiple projects advancing through design, funding coordination, and implementation planning

Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Project Status Dashboard

City of Oneida – DRI Award: \$10,000,000
Total Projects: 8
Current Program Phase: Implementation

Current Project Activity Summary

Active Projects: **8 of 8**

Project	Status	Current Phase
Downtown Streetscape Improvements	Active	Engineering / Design & Supplemental Funding Coordination
Veterans Memorial Park Improvements	Active	Design / Cost Refinement
AYSO Soccer Fields Development	Active	Engineering / Site Planning
Downtown Business Assistance Fund	Active	Ongoing Project Administration
Hotel Oneida Redevelopment	Active	Developer Coordination / Project Advancement
Devereaux Building Redevelopment	Active	Project Development
Lerman Block Redevelopment	Active	Project Development
Comprehensive Plan & Form-Based Code	Active	Consultant-Led Planning Process

Recent Progress (Since September 2025)

- Planning & Development Department leadership position filled
- Consultant contract executed for Comprehensive Plan and Form-Based Code
- Engineering coordination underway for Streetscape, Veterans Park, and Soccer Fields
- DRI coordination re-established with NYS Department of State
- Planning Commission / Zoning Board of Appeals meetings restarted
- Downtown Business Assistance Fund administration continuing with MRB Group
- Supplemental funding opportunities being pursued to leverage DRI investment

Funding Coordination Currently Underway

The City is actively pursuing multiple supplemental funding opportunities to expand the impact of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative investments, particularly for the Downtown Streetscape project and other public improvement projects associated with the DRI program.

By coordinating multiple funding programs simultaneously, the City is working to leverage the original DRI investment to expand the scale of improvements while minimizing additional financial burden on local taxpayers.

The following funding initiatives are currently underway:

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

The City, in partnership with **C&S Engineers**, is preparing a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant application to support a comprehensive downtown streetscape and pedestrian safety project. The project includes sidewalk reconstruction, ADA-compliant curb ramps, upgraded crosswalks, corridor lighting improvements, street trees, and streetscape amenities connecting Main Street to the Oneida Rail Trail.

The TAP application proposes a **total project cost of approximately \$5.65 million**, with **\$4.52 million requested in federal TAP funding** and a required **local match of approximately \$1.13 million**. The application deadline for this program was **March 12, 2026**.

Federal Congressional Appropriations Request

The City recently met with a representative from **Senator John Mannion's office** to review several DRI projects and discuss potential federal funding opportunities. Following that meeting, the City submitted a **\$2 million Congressional appropriations request** for the Downtown Streetscape project, supported by three letters of support.

The City intends to submit the same request to **Senator Charles Schumer and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand**, which is standard practice for congressional appropriations requests.

CHIPS Road Funding

The City currently has approximately **\$2 million in available CHIPS roadway funding**, which is anticipated to support paving improvements along **Main Street**. Coordinating CHIPS funding with the Streetscape project will allow the City to leverage state roadway funding for paving while focusing DRI and grant resources on pedestrian infrastructure and streetscape enhancements.

Urban Forestry Grant Coordination

The City has begun discussions with the **Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board** regarding potential urban forestry grant opportunities to support tree planting within the downtown streetscape corridor. Early coordination suggests that this funding could assist with acquisition and planting of street trees, potentially allowing additional landscaping improvements within the streetscape project area.

Municipal Parks and Recreation (MPR) Grant Program

The City has also submitted an application to the **New York State Municipal Parks and Recreation Grant Program** requesting **\$900,000** to support the development of the **Oneida Soccer Fields project at 248 Wilson Street**. The application proposes a total project cost of approximately **\$2.6 million**, combining DRI funding with state grant funding and local match resources.

Program Outlook

All DRI projects are currently active and progressing through their respective planning, design, development, or implementation phases. Over the past several months, the City has worked to restart and advance projects that had previously been inactive while coordinating engineering work, grant applications, and project partnerships necessary for implementation.

As design work progresses and decisions on pending grant applications are received, the City anticipates continued advancement of these projects over the coming months, with several initiatives expected to move into final design, funding coordination, or construction preparation.

Downtown Streetscape Improvements

Original DRI Award: \$1,521,000

1. Background

The Downtown Streetscape Improvements project was identified through the City of Oneida's Strategic Investment Plan as a key investment intended to enhance the pedestrian environment and overall appearance of the downtown corridor. The project focuses primarily on improvements along Main Street and adjacent downtown streets, including sidewalk reconstruction, curbing, lighting, landscaping, and streetscape amenities designed to improve safety, strengthen walkability, and support downtown businesses.

The project corridor includes Main Street from Lenox Avenue to East Elm Street, along with portions of Oneida Street and Farrier Avenue. These improvements are intended to strengthen pedestrian connectivity between key downtown destinations such as City Hall, the Kallet Civic Center, Higinbotham Park, and the Oneida Rail Trail.

The Oneida Rail Trail is an approximately 11-mile multi-use trail that connects to the Erie Canalway Trail system and already brings pedestrian and bicycle traffic through the downtown area. Streetscape improvements are intended to make the downtown corridor safer, more accessible, and more inviting for both residents and visitors traveling on foot or by bicycle.

The goal of the project is to create a more attractive and accessible downtown environment that encourages pedestrian activity, supports local commerce, and strengthens the overall identity of the downtown district.

2. Current Status

The City is currently working with C&S Engineers to advance preliminary design concepts and evaluate implementation strategies that align with available funding sources. Early cost evaluations indicate that a full reconstruction of the downtown streetscape corridor would exceed the original DRI allocation.

In response, the City is actively pursuing several supplemental funding opportunities and has directed C&S Engineers to evaluate multiple design scenarios that would allow the project to move forward under varying funding levels.

This approach allows the City to proceed with improvements using the original DRI allocation while positioning the project to expand significantly if additional funding sources are secured. Coordination is also underway to align streetscape improvements with potential roadway paving work and landscaping enhancements in order to maximize the impact of available funding.

3. Limiting Factors / Challenges

Several factors currently influence the scope and timeline of the project:

- Construction costs have increased significantly since the original DRI planning phase due to inflation in materials and labor.
- Streetscape improvements require coordination with roadway work, utilities, pedestrian infrastructure, and landscaping elements.
- Construction phasing must be carefully planned in order to maintain pedestrian access to downtown businesses during implementation.
- Final design decisions will depend in part on the outcome of several grant applications currently being pursued.
- The City is evaluating multiple funding scenarios in order to determine the most effective implementation strategy.

4. Next Steps

- Submit the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant application requesting \$4,518,625 in federal funding (March 12, 2026 deadline).
- Continue coordination with C&S Engineers to develop phased implementation scenarios based on potential funding levels.
- Coordinate with NYSDOT regarding project eligibility and scope requirements related to the TAP program.
- Continue coordination with the Central New York Regional Planning & Development Board regarding participation in the Central New York Community Forests Initiative.
- Coordinate CHIPS roadway funding with planned paving improvements along Main Street.
- Advance the project toward final design and implementation once funding levels are confirmed.

5. Cost Projections

Original DRI Allocation: \$1,521,000

Additional funding opportunities currently being pursued include:

- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP): \$4,518,625 federal funding request
- Federal Congressional Appropriations Request: \$2,000,000
- CHIPS Road Funding – approximately \$2,000,000 available for roadway paving improvements along Main Street
- Central New York Community Forests Initiative: approximately \$250,000 in services for tree inventory, species selection, procurement, and planting

The Central New York Regional Planning & Development Board has provided a letter of support indicating that the City of Oneida has been identified as a partner community in the Central New

York Community Forests Initiative, which is expected to provide approximately \$250,000 in services that support downtown tree canopy improvements and may serve as match support for the project.

Because several funding opportunities are currently pending, the City has directed C&S Engineers to develop multiple implementation scenarios, including:

- A DRI base scenario utilizing only the original DRI funding allocation
- A DRI plus landscaping scenario incorporating forestry grant support
- A comprehensive streetscape reconstruction scenario assuming successful award of the TAP grant

This phased planning approach allows the City to proceed with improvements using available DRI funding while positioning the project to expand significantly if additional funding sources are secured.

Veterans Memorial Park Improvements

Original DRI Award: \$1,059,000

1. Background

The Veterans Memorial Park Improvements project was identified in the City of Oneida's Downtown Revitalization Initiative Strategic Investment Plan as an investment intended to modernize recreational facilities and strengthen Veterans Memorial Park as a community gathering space. The park serves a wide range of recreational and civic functions, including youth sports, community events, and commemorative activities.

The DRI project focuses on four primary improvement components within the park:

- Construction of a new splash pad adjacent to the municipal pool complex
- Conversion of existing tennis courts into pickleball courts and rehabilitation of the adjacent basketball court
- Improvements and expansion of the existing Veterans Memorial area
- ADA upgrades and fixture replacement within park restroom facilities

Together, these improvements are intended to modernize aging park infrastructure, improve accessibility, and expand recreational opportunities for residents.

As part of the memorial redesign, the concept plan includes the potential installation of a decommissioned F-16 aircraft mounted above the memorial plaza. The memorial plaza improvements themselves are part of the DRI project. The acquisition, restoration, and installation of the aircraft is being pursued separately through private fundraising efforts led by the Oneida Afterburners Committee.

The aircraft component is not required for the memorial improvements to proceed. The memorial plaza design can function independently of the aircraft display if Council determines that component should not be included.

2. Current Status

The City is currently working with C&S Engineers to advance design and engineering for the Veterans Memorial Park improvements. A 30% design submission has been completed which includes schematic drawings and preliminary construction cost estimates for each of the project components.

The splash pad component proposes a new spray park adjacent to the existing municipal pool complex. The facility would utilize the existing bathhouse building for restroom access while providing a separate controlled entry so the splash pad can operate independently from the pool.

The tennis court conversion component would repurpose the park's two existing tennis courts into six pickleball courts to address growing demand for pickleball facilities. The project also includes resurfacing of the adjacent basketball court and replacement of aging backboards.

The Veterans Memorial component proposes expansion of the existing memorial area to create a more prominent commemorative space within the park. The concept design includes a circular plaza with additional flagpoles representing each branch of military service, granite monuments, engraved pavers, lighting, landscaping, and seating areas.

The restroom improvement component includes ADA upgrades and fixture replacement within the two restroom buildings located in the park. These upgrades are intended to improve accessibility and address aging plumbing fixtures and interior finishes.

3. Limiting Factors / Challenges

Several factors currently influence the scope and timeline of the project.

Preliminary 30% design estimates indicate that the combined improvements may exceed the original DRI allocation due to increases in construction costs since the Strategic Investment Plan was developed.

The Strategic Investment Plan originally estimated the park improvements project at approximately \$1,364,000. Current schematic design estimates prepared by C&S Engineers place the full four-component project at approximately \$1,760,536, reflecting changes in construction market conditions.

The memorial component of the project includes several line items associated with the F-16 concept. Based on the engineering cost estimate, those items include:

- Decorative concrete unit pavers (memorial plaza surface) – \$25,500
- F-16 aircraft display – \$130,000
- F-16 foundation and pedestal – \$29,000

Total estimated cost of F-16-related elements: \$184,500.

If these items are removed from the memorial design, the estimated construction cost for the memorial component would decrease from approximately \$637,364 to approximately \$452,864.

Removing those items would also reduce the total park project estimate from approximately \$1,760,536 to approximately \$1,576,036.

Because the project is currently at the schematic design stage, final scope adjustments and prioritization of project elements may be required as engineering work progresses and funding availability is finalized.

4. Next Steps

- Continue coordination with C&S Engineers to refine design and cost estimates beyond the 30% schematic design phase
- Evaluate project scope and identify potential adjustments needed to align improvements with available DRI funding
- Continue coordination with the Authority Having Jurisdiction regarding restroom capacity requirements associated with the splash pad component
- Continue coordination with the Oneida Afterburners Committee regarding privately funded elements of the memorial concept
- Pursue supplemental grant funding opportunities to support park infrastructure improvements
- Advance the project toward final design and construction planning

5. Cost Projections

Original DRI Allocation: \$1,059,000

Preliminary construction estimates prepared at the 30% design stage are as follows:

Splash Pad Construction — \$657,913

Pickleball Court Conversion and Basketball Court Rehabilitation — \$109,816

Veterans Memorial Expansion — \$637,364

ADA Restroom Upgrades and Fixture Replacement — \$355,443

Total Estimated Construction Cost — \$1,760,536

The memorial component includes approximately \$184,500 in elements associated with the potential F-16 aircraft display. If those elements are removed, the estimated memorial cost would decrease to approximately \$452,864 and the overall park project estimate would decrease to approximately \$1,576,036.

To address the funding gap and preserve project scope where feasible, the City has submitted an application requesting \$900,000 through the New York State Municipal Parks and Recreation Grant Program and is evaluating additional funding opportunities that support recreational infrastructure improvements.

Develop Area Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) Soccer Fields

Original DRI Award: \$760,000

1. Background

The Area Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) Soccer Fields project was identified through the City of Oneida's Downtown Revitalization Initiative Strategic Investment Plan as an opportunity to transform former flood-damaged residential properties into a community recreational asset.

The project site consists of properties that were previously acquired through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Buyout Program following repeated flooding events. Properties acquired through this program must remain as open space and cannot be redeveloped with residential or commercial structures.

Recreational uses such as athletic fields are specifically permitted under FEMA program guidelines and represent a productive way to return these properties to beneficial public use.

The project proposes the development of youth soccer fields and associated parking areas to support organized youth sports activities within the community while transforming formerly vacant lots into an active recreational space.

2. Current Status

Preliminary site review and project coordination have been conducted to evaluate the feasibility of developing youth soccer fields on the FEMA buyout properties. FEMA has previously approved recreational uses for the site consistent with the open space requirements associated with the buyout program.

Initial planning discussions have focused on potential field layout, site grading considerations, and parking access that would support youth sports programming while remaining compliant with FEMA open space restrictions.

The project is also being evaluated as part of the City's broader supplemental grant strategy, which seeks to combine DRI funding with additional recreation infrastructure funding sources where appropriate.

Because the project involves properties subject to FEMA floodplain restrictions, design development requires careful coordination to ensure that proposed improvements remain consistent with FEMA guidelines governing use of buyout properties.

3. Limiting Factors / Challenges

Several considerations influence the timeline and development approach for the soccer field project.

The site consists of former residential properties acquired through the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Buyout Program. These properties must remain open space in perpetuity and cannot be redeveloped with traditional structures. Recreational improvements must therefore be designed in a way that complies with FEMA program restrictions.

Floodplain considerations and FEMA compliance requirements require additional coordination and review during project planning to ensure that proposed improvements remain consistent with federal program guidelines.

Site grading and drainage conditions must also be evaluated as part of the engineering process to ensure that athletic field construction can be completed in a manner that maintains proper field playability and drainage performance.

4. Next Steps

- Continue coordination with FEMA and floodplain regulatory agencies to confirm compliance requirements for recreational improvements on the buyout properties
- Advance preliminary site design and layout for soccer fields and parking areas
- Evaluate engineering and site preparation requirements including grading and drainage improvements
- Coordinate project scope with supplemental grant funding opportunities where applicable
- Advance the project toward final design and construction planning

5. Cost Projections

Original DRI Allocation: \$760,000

The DRI allocation is intended to support the construction of youth soccer fields and associated parking infrastructure on the former FEMA buyout properties.

As project planning advances, engineering design and cost estimates will further refine the scope of site improvements required to support field construction, site preparation, and parking access.

The City continues to evaluate opportunities to supplement DRI funding through state recreation and infrastructure grant programs where applicable in order to maximize the impact of the investment while maintaining compliance with FEMA program requirements.

Downtown Business Assistance Fund

Original DRI Award: \$600,000

1. Background

The Downtown Business Assistance Fund (DBAF) was established through the City of Oneida's Downtown Revitalization Initiative to support improvements to downtown commercial properties and strengthen the economic vitality of the central business district.

The program provides reimbursement grants of up to \$100,000 to property and business owners for eligible improvements including façade improvements, permanent signage, interior renovations, leasehold improvements, and permanent machinery and equipment installations.

All projects must be completed prior to reimbursement, ensuring that public funds are only disbursed after work has been performed and verified.

Applicants are responsible for securing contractor bids, completing project scope development, and managing project construction in accordance with program guidelines prior to reimbursement.

MRB Group administers the program on behalf of the City of Oneida. Project applications are evaluated through a scoring system that considers project readiness, physical impact on the downtown environment, economic impact, and the project's ability to address DRI priorities and improve overall quality of life within the downtown district.

MRB Group came under contract with the City in August 2023 to administer the DBAF program.

2. Current Status

Multiple projects supported through the Downtown Business Assistance Fund are currently underway or recently completed, contributing to building improvements and reinvestment within the downtown corridor.

The first full project completion occurred at 134 Vanderbilt Avenue, where the DBAF supported exterior building improvements including roof work, gutters, overhang repairs, windows, siding, and doors.

Several additional projects are currently in active construction phases or advancing toward construction.

Current project updates include:

114 Vanderbilt Avenue

This project is no longer moving forward due to continued challenges securing bids from qualified contractors.

117 Madison Street

Construction is currently underway and progressing well, with minor delays related to material delivery timing.

130 Broad Street

Construction preparations are underway and work is expected to begin shortly or has recently begun.

134 Vanderbilt Avenue

Project completed.

145 Madison Street

A portion of the originally proposed scope was completed and reimbursement has been issued. The remaining scope was discontinued due to ongoing contractor bidding challenges. The project is considered complete.

146 Madison Street

Project scope is currently being refined due to roofing work that significantly affects the cost of the project. Once the final scope is confirmed, bid documents will be prepared and contractors will be solicited.

169 Main Street

Construction is underway and progressing smoothly.

The City and MRB Group have also solicited new applications from businesses within the DRI area. Three applications were recently received and are currently under review. Available funds from projects that did not proceed will be reallocated through the same scoring and review process.

3. Limiting Factors / Challenges

While the majority of DBAF projects have progressed successfully, several factors have influenced project timelines.

Because the program operates as a reimbursement grant program, project owners are responsible for securing contractor bids, finalizing project scopes, and completing construction prior to receiving reimbursement. In several cases, applicants experienced difficulty obtaining contractor bids for relatively small-scale construction projects, particularly in the current construction market where contractor availability and pricing have been volatile.

In other instances, project scopes required refinement due to cost escalation or the need for additional architectural or engineering work prior to construction.

Earlier turnover within the City’s planning department also contributed to some administrative delays during the early phases of program implementation. Program coordination has since stabilized and project administration is proceeding normally.

Two originally awarded projects ultimately did not proceed to construction due to continued contractor bid challenges and project feasibility considerations. In those cases, available funds are being reallocated to new applicants through the established scoring and review process.

4. Next Steps

- Continue administering active construction projects and processing reimbursements upon completion
- Finalize scope refinement and contractor bidding for the 146 Madison Street project
- Evaluate newly submitted applications for remaining program funds
- Reallocate funding from terminated projects through the established scoring process
- Continue coordination between MRB Group and the City of Oneida to monitor project progress

MRB Group conservatively anticipates that the Downtown Business Assistance Fund program will be fully completed by summer 2027.

5. Cost Projections

Original DRI Allocation: \$600,000

The Downtown Business Assistance Fund distributes funding across multiple individual projects rather than a single construction effort. Individual project awards may be up to \$100,000 and are reimbursed after construction completion.

Funding from projects that did not move forward is being reallocated to new applicants through the program’s established scoring and review process to ensure that remaining funds continue to support downtown improvements consistent with DRI goals.

Reimagine the Vacant Hotel Oneida

Original DRI Award: \$2,900,000

1. Background

The Hotel Oneida project was identified through the City of Oneida's Downtown Revitalization Initiative Strategic Investment Plan as a major catalytic redevelopment project intended to restore one of the City's most prominent and historically significant downtown buildings.

Located at the corner of Main Street and Lenox Avenue, the former Hotel Oneida is a highly visible vacant structure within the downtown core and within the Main-Broad-Grove Streets Historic District. Originally constructed as a hotel and social gathering place for the community, the building has remained vacant and in deteriorated condition for many years.

The redevelopment concept proposed through the DRI program is an adaptive reuse of the building into a mixed-use project consisting of upper-floor apartments, restaurant and lounge space, banquet and catering facilities, and limited short-term transient units. The project is intended to return a long-vacant landmark building to productive use, provide additional housing options downtown, create employment opportunities, and restore a highly visible gateway property in the City's central business district.

Because of the size, age, condition, and historic status of the building, this project has always been understood as a complex historic rehabilitation effort requiring multiple funding sources, approvals, and coordinated implementation steps.

2. Current Status

The City has maintained active and ongoing coordination with the development team regarding the redevelopment of Hotel Oneida. The project remains active within the DRI portfolio and continues to be treated as a priority downtown redevelopment initiative.

The project has advanced meaningfully over the past several months. The developer pulled a building permit in December 2025 and currently has an active demolition permit. Interior demolition and related preparatory work are underway.

The project's Conditional Use Permit completion deadline was extended in February 2026 for an additional two years, while all previously approved conditions remain in full force and effect. No changes were approved to the use, intensity, layout, footprint, parking, or access associated with the project.

At the February 10, 2026 Planning Commission / Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, the applicant reported that contractors had recently completed walkthroughs to solidify construction cost estimates, financing negotiations were ongoing with two lending institutions, and a formal

loan commitment letter was anticipated within approximately 60 to 90 days. The applicant further represented that demolition mobilization was anticipated to begin on or about April 1, 2026, general construction and structural renovation no later than June 1, 2026, and that the residential apartment units were expected to be completed prior to restaurant buildout and opening.

The applicant also reported that temporary electric service had been installed on each floor, potable water service had been extended pending final meter installation, and a permanent six-inch water service line and fire service connection are planned.

In addition, the City has continued to hold bi-weekly update meetings with the development team in order to monitor progress, coordinate on issues as they arise, and maintain accountability as the project moves through financing, demolition, and construction readiness milestones.

One of the most significant implementation issues associated with the original approvals was parking. That issue has now been addressed through coordinated action involving the City of Oneida, the Madison County Industrial Development Agency, and the project team, establishing a permanent off-site parking solution tied directly to the redevelopment.

3. Limiting Factors / Challenges

Several factors continue to influence the pace and complexity of the Hotel Oneida redevelopment.

- The building is a large, aging, historically significant structure that requires substantial rehabilitation and full modernization of major systems.
- The project depends on a complex capital stack involving private financing and historic rehabilitation incentives.
- As with many large adaptive reuse projects, inflation in labor, materials, financing costs, and construction conditions has affected overall feasibility and timing.
- Because the project is a historic rehabilitation, historic preservation requirements and related approvals remain an important part of implementation.
- Utility and infrastructure coordination, including final water service and any related permitting, must continue to be monitored as the project advances.
- The project is being advanced by a private sponsor, so final redevelopment timing remains dependent on sponsor financing and construction sequencing.

For these reasons, while the project is clearly active and moving forward, the City cannot responsibly assign a guaranteed completion date until financing and major construction milestones are fully locked in.

4. Next Steps

- Continue bi-weekly coordination meetings with the development team
- Monitor progress on financing commitments and capital stack completion

- Continue demolition and early preparatory work under existing permits
- Support advancement of any remaining permitting, utility, and compliance steps needed to keep the project moving
- Maintain documentation and oversight related to project milestones and existing approvals
- Support transition into subsequent structural renovation and rehabilitation phases as sponsor-side milestones are achieved

5. Cost Projections

Original DRI Award: \$2,900,000

Based on the original project profile prepared during the DRI process, the redevelopment concept was previously estimated at a total project cost of approximately \$8,509,525, with a DRI funding request of \$3,200,000 at that time.

The original financing structure contemplated multiple funding sources, including developer equity, Historic Tax Credit equity, conventional mortgage financing, C-PACE financing, utility incentives, and DRI assistance.

Because the project is a private redevelopment and market conditions have changed since the original DRI submissions were prepared, total project cost and financing figures should be understood as subject to ongoing refinement by the project sponsor and its financing partners.

The City's DRI award for this project remains \$2,900,000, and the City will continue coordinating with the sponsor as the project advances through the remaining implementation steps.

Restore and Upgrade the Devereaux Building

Original DRI Award: \$1,569,000

1. Background

The Devereaux Building project was identified through the City of Oneida's Downtown Revitalization Initiative Strategic Investment Plan as a mixed-use redevelopment intended to restore and reactivate a prominent downtown building.

The project focuses on rehabilitation of the Devereaux Building at 144–148 Main Street for a combination of residential and commercial use. Based on project planning materials, the concept includes upper-floor residential units and first-floor commercial or live/work space intended to increase downtown occupancy, encourage reinvestment, and strengthen activity along Main Street.

The Devereaux project has also been considered as part of a broader Main / Madison redevelopment concept involving multiple nearby properties. Based on the most current written update from the development team, that broader effort includes the Devereaux Building at 144–148 Main Street and the Madison Street properties at 136 and 138 Madison Street. The vacant lot at 140 Madison Street is not currently part of the active Restore NY project scope, but the developer has indicated interest in incorporating it in the future for parking and access. The previously discussed inclusion of 153–155 Madison Street is no longer part of the active development package.

2. Current Status

The City remains in active coordination with Monahan Development Corp. regarding the Devereaux Building and the related Main / Madison redevelopment concept. Based on the most recent written update provided by the developer, the Devereaux Building is expected to be the first phase of the broader effort to move forward.

The developer has indicated that purchase offers have been signed and that closing on the Devereaux property is anticipated in May 2026. Updated project schedules provided by the development team show SEQR review, SHPO / National Park Service coordination, architectural design, site plan review, and building permit sequencing underway or scheduled in advance of construction.

According to the most recent schedule, site plan review is anticipated in spring 2026, building permit activity in mid-2026, interior demolition beginning thereafter, and interior rehabilitation and exterior restoration following in sequence.

The City has continued to push for written status updates and remains in communication with the development team regarding implementation readiness, timing, and coordination needs.

3. Limiting Factors / Challenges

Several factors continue to affect the pace and complexity of the Devereaux project.

- The project is part of a broader private redevelopment effort involving multiple downtown properties, which makes sequencing and financing coordination especially important.
- While the Devereaux Building remains active, the originally discussed inclusion of 153–155 Madison Street is no longer part of the Monahan-controlled project scope, which has required the City and State partners to reassess parts of the broader redevelopment strategy.
- The project remains dependent on successful closing, financing, historic review, site plan approval, permitting, and construction sequencing.
- As with other historic mixed-use redevelopment projects, rising construction costs, financing costs, and implementation timing continue to affect feasibility and delivery.
- Because this is a private redevelopment project, the City can coordinate, monitor, and support progress, but cannot independently control sponsor-side execution.

4. Next Steps

- Continue coordination with Monahan Development Corp. regarding closing, financing, and project sequencing
- Support advancement of local review and approval steps, including site plan review and permitting, as materials are submitted
- Maintain communication with State partners regarding project scope and implementation timing
- Monitor whether the project proceeds according to the updated developer schedule for closing, demolition, rehabilitation, and restoration
- Continue evaluating implications of the removal of 153–155 Madison Street from the broader redevelopment package

5. Cost Projections

Original DRI Award: \$1,569,000

Based on project budgeting materials prepared for the Devereaux component, the redevelopment concept has been estimated at approximately \$7,211,478 in total project cost.

The preliminary financing structure contemplates a combination of bank financing, developer equity, and DRI assistance.

Because the project remains in the private redevelopment and preconstruction phase, total project cost, sequencing, and financing assumptions should be understood as subject to refinement as the development team advances toward closing and construction.

The City's DRI award for this project remains \$1,569,000.

Redevelop the Lerman Building

Original DRI Award: \$1,141,000

1. Background

The Lerman Building project was included in the City of Oneida's Downtown Revitalization Initiative Strategic Investment Plan as a private redevelopment project intended to rehabilitate an underutilized downtown property and introduce additional residential and commercial activity into the City's downtown core.

The project focused on redevelopment of the property located at 153–155 Madison Street for a mixed-use concept including residential units and commercial or live/work space. The project was intended to complement other nearby downtown redevelopment efforts, including the Devereaux Building and other Madison Street properties, with the broader goal of strengthening the downtown residential base and supporting additional business activity.

The project was structured as a privately led redevelopment effort supported through the DRI program.

2. Current Status

Based on recent communications with project stakeholders, the status of the Lerman Building redevelopment project is currently uncertain.

The City has received indications that the property owner may no longer wish to proceed with the project as originally proposed under the DRI program. Because of this possibility, the City proactively contacted the Department of State (DOS) project manager to inform them of the situation and to seek guidance regarding potential next steps should the project formally withdraw from the program.

At this time, the project owner has not formally withdrawn from the DRI project. As a result, the project remains listed as part of the City's DRI portfolio pending formal confirmation of the owner's intentions.

According to guidance provided by the Department of State, if the project owner confirms that they do not intend to proceed with the DRI-funded project, the State agencies administering the program—including the Department of State, Empire State Development (ESD), and Homes and Community Renewal (HCR)—will work directly with the project owner to obtain the necessary documentation to formally release the funding.

3. Limiting Factors / Challenges

Several factors have affected the status of the Lerman Building project.

- The project is a privately led redevelopment effort and therefore depends on the property owner's willingness and ability to proceed with the DRI-funded redevelopment concept.
- The City has received indications that the owner may be considering redevelopment outside the DRI program structure.
- Until the owner formally confirms their intentions, the City and State agencies cannot formally reallocate the project funding.
- Any reallocation of funds must follow DRI program rules and approval processes administered by the State.

4. Potential Next Steps

If the project owner confirms that they do not intend to proceed with the DRI project, the City will work with the Department of State, Empire State Development, and Homes and Community Renewal to formally close out the project and reallocate the funding.

Based on preliminary guidance provided by the Department of State, any returned funding would generally be expected to be reassigned to another project identified within the City's Strategic Investment Plan (SWIP). Priority is typically given to projects within the SWIP that are privately led redevelopment projects before considering municipal projects.

Because multiple State agencies are involved in administering the DRI program, any formal project cancellation and reallocation of funding requires coordination among several State partners and adherence to program procedures. As a result, if the project is formally withdrawn, the process of releasing and reallocating funds may take several months to complete. The City will continue to coordinate with State agencies throughout this process and will work to ensure that any returned funding is reassigned to eligible projects in accordance with DRI program priorities.

5. Cost Projections

Original DRI Award: \$1,141,000

At this time, the project remains listed as an active DRI project pending confirmation of the project owner's intentions.

If the project owner formally withdraws from the DRI program, the funding would be returned to the City's DRI allocation and reassigned in coordination with State partners in accordance with SWIP priorities and program requirements.

Comprehensive Plan Update and Downtown Form-Based Zoning Overlay Code

Original DRI Award: \$150,000

1. Background

The City of Oneida's Downtown Revitalization Initiative includes the preparation of a new Comprehensive Plan and the creation of a Form-Based Zoning Overlay Code for the downtown DRI area.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to establish the City's long-term vision for growth, land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, economic development, public spaces, and community character. It serves as the City's primary policy document for guiding future decisions and investment.

The Form-Based Zoning Overlay Code is intended to serve as an implementation tool for that vision within the downtown DRI area. Unlike traditional zoning, which focuses primarily on land use categories and bulk regulations, form-based zoning focuses more directly on the physical form of development, including building placement, building design, streetscape, walkability, and the relationship between buildings and the public realm.

In Oneida's case, the Downtown Form-Based Code is intended to help ensure that future development in the DRI area aligns with the goals of the DRI program and supports a more cohesive, walkable, and attractive downtown environment.

The broader long-term intent is that this downtown overlay will function as an initial implementation area and proof of concept. As the City gains experience with the overlay and completes the Comprehensive Plan update, the lessons learned may help inform future citywide zoning modernization efforts, including possible expansion of form-based zoning principles beyond the downtown area if additional State grant funding can be secured.

2. Current Status

The request for proposals for the Comprehensive Plan and Form-Based Code was issued on March 1, 2024. Consultant proposals were received in response to that RFP, but the evaluation and selection process was never brought to completion.

When the current Director of Planning and Development began reviewing the City's DRI planning initiatives after coming into the position in September 2025, the proposal booklets, scoring sheets, and related materials were found stacked among other project materials in the basement offices. At that point, the bid process had effectively been sitting for well over a year without final action.

Those materials were retrieved and the process was reactivated. Additional scoring and evaluation were completed by City staff, including the City Engineer, and consultant presentations were scheduled with City leadership and staff to evaluate the firms' qualifications, project approach, and ability to deliver the work.

Following that process, Barton & Loguidice (B&L) was selected to lead the project. The professional services agreement with B&L was executed on November 12, 2025.

Since that time, the City has been working with B&L to prepare for project launch and committee formation. The Comprehensive Plan kickoff meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2026.

The City established a Comprehensive Plan steering committee through a referral- and interview-based process designed to assemble as balanced and representative a group as possible. In assembling the committee, the City made a deliberate effort to include a range of backgrounds, ages, socioeconomic perspectives, and viewpoints.

Although the original RFP contemplated participation by elected officials and other City representatives, subsequent coordination with the Department of State made clear that the working committee should function as a community advisory body rather than a committee dominated by elected or high-ranking City officials. As a result, elected officials, the Mayor, Common Council members, and senior administration were intentionally not included on the committee. The Director of Planning and Development is serving as the City's sole official representative in coordinating the process.

The Form-Based Code component will begin later in the process, after the Comprehensive Plan has advanced far enough to establish the policy direction and development framework needed to inform the code.

3. Limiting Factors / Challenges

Several factors have influenced the timeline of this project.

- The consultant selection process had stalled prior to execution and had to be reactivated before the project could move forward.
- Because the Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide the Form-Based Code, the two efforts must proceed in sequence rather than simultaneously.
- Significant time was required to identify, vet, and assemble a balanced steering committee capable of representing a broad cross-section of the community.
- Both projects require extensive public engagement, draft review, SEQRA compliance, and formal local adoption steps, which makes this a multi-phase planning effort rather than a quick code update.
- Any future effort to expand form-based zoning principles citywide would require additional planning, funding, and State support beyond the current DRI-funded downtown overlay project.

Despite those factors, the project is now fully reactivated and moving into the formal kickoff and public engagement phase.

4. Next Steps

- Conduct the Comprehensive Plan kickoff meeting on March 24, 2026
- Begin formal existing-conditions review, community participation planning, and stakeholder engagement
- Launch the steering committee process and begin regular committee meetings
- Proceed with surveys, interviews, workshops, and public outreach required under the State work plan
- Advance the Comprehensive Plan through draft development, public review, SEQRA, and local adoption
- Begin the Form-Based Zoning Overlay process approximately midway through the Comprehensive Plan, once the City's land use vision and policy framework have been sufficiently established
- Evaluate future State grant opportunities that could support a broader citywide zoning modernization effort, potentially including expanded use of form-based zoning principles beyond the DRI area

5. Cost Projections

Original DRI Award: \$150,000

The City executed a professional services agreement with Barton & Loguidice for the Comprehensive Plan and Form-Based Zoning Overlay Code in the amount of \$214,928.

This combined planning effort is being advanced in coordination with the State contract work plans for the Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan Update and the Form-Based Zoning Overlay District.

Because the work is proceeding through structured planning, outreach, environmental review, and adoption phases, costs are tied primarily to consultant services, public engagement, technical planning support, and preparation of final policy and zoning documents rather than physical construction.