



Gov. Cuomo unveils ten projects for Niagara Falls, part of \$10 million DRI award

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Niagara Falls, NY Governor Andrew Cuomo unveiled 10 transformational projects as part of the \$10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) award. The strategic investments will strengthen small business, support private investment in underutilized buildings, and bring new residential units, commercial space, and a hotel to the historic Bridge District. The investments are part of the governor's ongoing efforts to revitalize the upstate economy and create more opportunities for the Western Region.

"The investments we are making in Niagara Falls as part of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative are a key part of our focus on building New York State back better than ever before," gov. Cuomo said. "Through the DRI, we are empowering local communities to fulfill their vision for downtown areas that provide plentiful business, residential and recreational opportunities for all. These projects will build on the assets that exist in the world-famous Niagara Falls to help revitalize Western New York."

Lieutenant governor Kathy Hochul said, "As a Western New Yorker and frequent visitor to Niagara Falls, I know the city is a critical economic asset that has so much to offer. Through our Downtown Revitalization Initiative, we are building on Niagara Falls as a world-class tourist destination."

to create more economic opportunity and further transform the community into a great place to work, play, and raise a family."

Niagara Falls was named a DRI Round 4 winner in August 2019. The Bridge District, formerly known as North Main St. or The North End historically served as the downtown shopping district for Niagara Falls. Today the district is being reborn with revitalization including the recently completed intermodal train station, new connections to the waterfront and cultural attractions. The DRI will capitalize on and complement these improvements, as well as the Robert Moses Parkway Removal project, by supporting the creation of green space, the construction of streetscape improvements with lighting and traffic calming measures, which will help to support planned private investment in the downtown. Additional projects will strengthen small business, support private investment in underutilized buildings, bring new residential units, commercial space, and a hotel.

The projects to be funded through the Niagara Falls DRI include:

Establish Academic Innovation Hub - \$1,100,000: Development of an academic and community space for Niagara University. The facility will include professional workforce training, job promotion services, English as a second language programs, urban development and planning, small business development, early childhood care, and an eSports lab.

Transform 1810 +1812 Main Street into Boutique Hotel - \$700,000: Renovation of two vacant buildings on Main Street into a mixed-use development with retail space and boutique hotel rooms.

Implement a Small Project Grant Fund - \$620,000: Establish and implement a capital improvement grant program for small-scale building improvements throughout the DRI area.

Renovate 2025 Main Street into Mixed- Use Development - \$500,000: Renovation of the existing 9,900 SF building to enhance the convenience store, add one retail storefront on Niagara Street on the first floor and create apartments on the two upper stories.

Redevelop 2002 Main Street into Retail and Office Space - \$400,000: Renovation of 2002 Main Street into a mixed-use building with first floor retail and community space as well as modern office space. The first-floor community space is available for community gatherings.

Create an Outdoor Eating Space and Museum at DiCamillo Bakery - \$250,000: Creation of a small museum and gallery space, an outdoor dining area, sidewalk and landscaping improvements at DiCamillo Bakery. Includes purchase of state-of-the-art equipment to expand production.

Implement Streetscape Enhancements on Main Street - \$3,720,000: Streetscape enhancements along Main Street including sidewalk improvements, replacement of street trees and street furniture, as well as the conversion and replacement of light poles on Main Street to LED.

Complete Implementation of the Freedom Plaza and Overlook - \$1,500,000: Site improvements adjacent to the Suspension Bridge to create a plaza/event space and an overlook to the Niagara River connecting to the trail system and Whirlpool Street. The plan also includes an 18-space parking area for visitors and interpretive artwork and signage.

Launch Public Art and Placemaking Initiative - \$615,000: Public art mural installations on seven properties within the DRI area to enhance placemaking and the public realm.

Create a Public Plaza on Main Street at Cleveland Avenue - \$295,000: Create a plaza and event space, inclusive of public art, movable furniture, special paving, and landscaping in front of the Public Safety Building.

The city developed a strategic investment plan to revitalize its downtown with \$300,000 in planning funds from the \$10 million DRI grant. A local planning committee made up of municipal representatives, community leaders, and other stakeholders led the effort, supported by a team of private sector experts and state planners. The Strategic Investment Plan for Niagara Falls examined local assets and opportunities and identified economic development, transportation, housing, and community projects that align with the community's vision for revitalization and that are poised for implementation.

The DRI projects are the latest example of Governor Cuomo's ongoing commitment to the Western Region.

New York secretary of state Rossana Rosado said, "Niagara Falls is one of the world's great attractions and these projects will make it a more enjoyable experience for residents and visitors.

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative projects bring the next level of development for this landmark community and create an economic boom for the entire Western New York region.”

New York State Homes and Community Renewal commissioner RuthAnne Visnauskas said, “DRI funding unlocks the opportunity for communities to become resurgent. The beauty of the Governor’s program is that it is directed by the local stakeholders, allowing growth and redevelopment efforts to be determined holistically by those who best know the community and its needs. The ten awarded projects in Niagara Falls will benefit residents, visitors and businesses alike and bring fresh opportunity and economic growth where it is most urgently needed.”

City of Niagara Falls mayor Robert Restaino said, “I’m grateful for the Governor’s continued commitment to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative with the selection of these dynamic projects for Niagara Falls. These projects, which were chosen with a great deal of community input, will infuse new life into the community by investing in our cultural and historical assets to ensure our residents and visitors can continue to enjoy these for years to come.”

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