

Village of Highland Falls

Orange County, NY



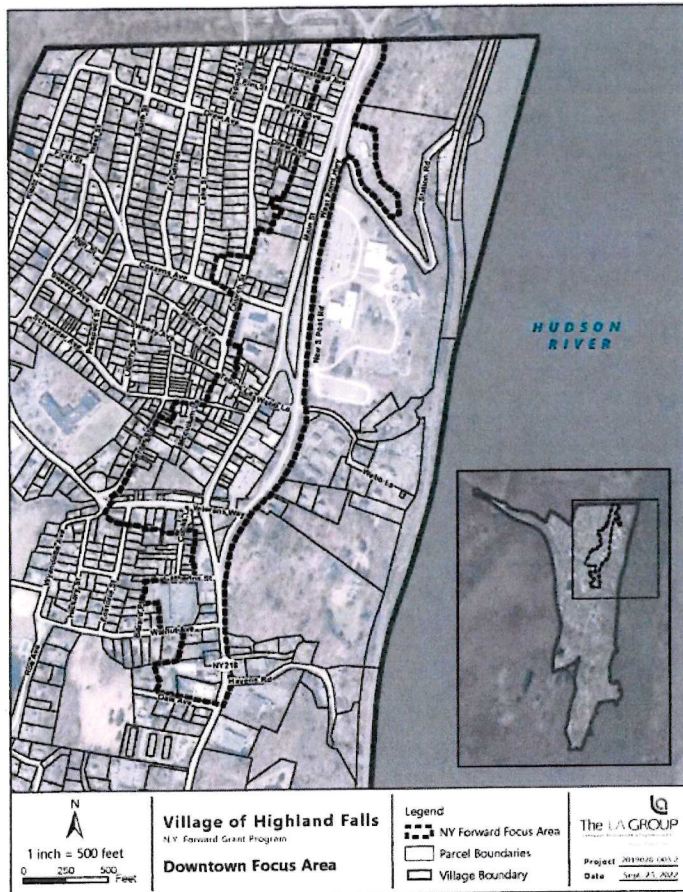
NY Forward Application – 2023

REDC Region: Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council
Program Application: NY Forward
Municipality Name: Village of Highland Falls
Downtown Name: Highland Falls
County Name: Orange County
Primary Contact: Joseph E. D’Onofrio, Mayor - MayorJoe@highlandfallsny.org
Secondary Contact: Lynae Mesaris, Village Clerk – Lmesaris@highlandfallsny.org

Geographic Area

The Village of Highland Falls’ downtown is a compact area mixed with small parcels and dense building coverage, mixed land uses, and charming architecture situated in some of the most popular tourist destinations in New York State. The boundaries targeted by this NY Forward application include primarily the central business district, specifically comprising .07 square miles of 143 parcels. The dimensions of the area are about 900 feet at the widest point of the east/west axis and 4,000 feet along the north-south axis of Main Street and West Point Highway. The proposed NY Forward project area, identified by the map below, surrounds Main Street and the West Point Highway, extending from the northern Village boundary at West Point’s Thayer Gate to the southern-most intersection of Main Street and Dale Avenue.

The parcels within this project area are mostly small, supporting a dense pattern of highly integrated uses in form and function. This mimics the uses within downtown Highland Falls: the 2-4 story buildings are highly diversified in use in addition to being in close proximity, offering increased opportunities for pedestrian traffic. Due to these characteristics, the proposed projects described in this application will yield dramatic and positive effects on pedestrian movement throughout the area, and will support connections between the Village and its strongest supporting partner for this project, the United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point.



Justification

Downtown Highland Falls is a small, walkable area with small-buildings, housing amenities including barbershops, a laundromat, an ice-cream parlor, several historic churches, an Irish bar, a Mexican restaurant, and more offerings for residents and visitors. However, downtown is mostly traversed by vehicles rather than pedestrians despite its many offerings within walking distance from each other. The Village is brimming with small-town charm recognized by residents and a few visitors, including J.P. Morgan and Billy Joel. In 1981, the Village became known as Hometown, U.S.A. for welcoming the hostages taken from the American Embassy in

Iran home. Despite being known as the gateway to the USMA at West Point, the Village is not often visited by the 3 million tourists who visit West Point.

The Village has been identified by Orange County's most recent Comprehensive Plan as a Priority Growth Area. Although the Village has been consistently making efforts to improve, utilizing funding from various sources to fund a Local Waterfront Revitalization Strategy (2020), improve sidewalks and renovations to individual buildings, and more, these projects have been completed in a "piecemeal" fashion as funding has become available. However, the underlying premise of the proposed NY Forward program will coordinate and maximize these efforts by unifying them in a manner that greatly supports the downtown region's evolution toward a more revitalized community center and potentially reverse the declining trend of the residential population in the Village. This program will also offer much-needed assistance to the Village as it continues to recover from major flooding experienced on July 9, 2023, which caused over \$40M in public damages to local infrastructure including but not limited to local bridges, water and wastewater treatment facilities, and streets.

Downtown Highland Falls has strategic advantages that make it an excellent community to attract and sustain long-time residency and frequent tourism. Downtown is the local community center supporting civic engagement, services, culture, and commerce, and it exists within a compact and walkable setting. However, the area is dominated by vehicular traffic, and it needs improvements to connections for pedestrians and cyclists from the downtown area to residential neighborhoods and the campus at the USMA West Point. Given the Village's proximity to significant historic sites, this is untapped potential for the Village's local economy. While the local Chamber of Commerce manages tourism services, visitors find it challenging to access historical information through the Village website or online because of the spotty Internet and cell service within the area. Additionally, storefronts are currently in a patchwork state, and the lack of consistent pedestrian features (including sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.) discourages people from alternative modes of transportation downtown. The Village thus is seeking funding to support the installation of supportive street infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists to improve the flow of traffic in the downtown corridor, the expansion of connective access to the waterfront on Station Hill Road, the renovation of building façades, and the installation of wayfinding signage to offer directions to historic places of interest. All this will further the Village's goal to revitalize downtown and draw further attention to the too-quiet culture and history of Highland Falls.

The Village has undertaken a strategic and pragmatic approach to prepare for this round of NY Forward, working collaboratively with residents and business owners to create a vision that the entire community supports. This is further informed by two recently completed plans for development including the 2020 Local Waterfront Revitalization Strategy (LWRS), associated 2021 Implementation Strategy funded through Village funds and a grant from the NYS Department of State (DOS), and the 2022 update to the Village Comprehensive Plan funded through a grant from the Hudson River Valley Greenway. As a result, the vision for Downtown Highland Falls includes the following:

- The transformation of Main Street into an attractive and pedestrian-accessible area, encouraging healthy living and decarbonization in a setting rich with cultural, recreational, and leisure-time activities.
- Improvement of the downtown to become a regional center for commerce, housing of varying types and levels of affordability, farm-to-table dining, and recreation.
- Expanded access to the Hudson River waterfront through increased pedestrian routes and parking lot expansion,
- Improved access between West Point and the Downtown region of Highland Falls.
- Establishment of more opportunities for jobs through the addition of a downtown hotel, retail stores, and other business types from entry-level positions to skilled, management level positions.
- Development of a marketing plan to define strategies and messaging to promote downtown Highland Falls through online outreach, local maps, and Village-wide events.

The Village is seeking support from the MHREDC to implement its vision, which meets the existing needs in the downtown, and is well informed by the previous efforts to expand and improve the community. More specifically, the Village wishes to create a welcoming, pedestrian-strong streetscape with stores and shops that showcase the character and heritage of local history while providing goods and services that appeal to residents and visitors alike. It is anticipated that by the completion of this project, the Village will offer not only an enhanced “Live, Work, Play” environment, but also improved access to housing and employment opportunities for a variety of people from varying socio-economic levels. These elements are anticipated to benefit the entire Village and neighboring destinations including the USMA West Point, Bear Mountain State Park and Zoo, and the Appalachian Trail. Moreover, the Village began talks with neighboring municipality Cold Spring to establish a water taxi system to usher visitors safely across the Hudson River to access both destinations and improve the accessibility of tourism within the Mid-Hudson Region. This further increases the Village’s potential to house a thriving downtown area.

Overall, Highland Falls seeks to make the downtown center a destination for the region, and this project will transform it into a place where residents and visitors will be immersed in a historic environment with venues for dining and entertainment, civic spaces for festivals and events, modern infrastructure and technology, and a hub for commerce for both local and national businesses. Through the successful award of this program, the Village will be able to step forward in its mission to establish a vibrant environment that draws in a diverse population of residents to live, work, and play—key elements of the MHREDC’s Strategic Plan. Furthermore, as a registered Climate Smart Community, the Village’s plans to mobilize pedestrian activity throughout downtown will further encourage decarbonization and healthier living through the enhancement of the downtown environment. This will encourage pedestrian movement as the primary mode of transportation among the diverse and compact land uses (residences, place of employment, service providers, recreational assets, dining, shopping, lodging) of downtown Highland Falls.

The Village of Highland Falls conveniently offers access to many highly recognized tourist destinations and contains Revolutionary War markers and 9/11 memorials beside the historic

Hudson River Estuary. Enhancing the visibility of this history will foster local pride, further drawing in visitors and new residents to a region that remembers its centuries-gone past and works toward a sustainable future.

Vision Statement

Highland Falls is an area of great historical significance that has a contemporary vision to revitalize the entire community while weaving its history into the needs of the future. As it currently stands, Downtown Highland Falls is lackluster and often overlooked due to its outdated architecture, limited pedestrian safety features, and lack of branding. Moreover, a major storm in July 2023 caused significant destruction to the Village and its infrastructure, further necessitating re-investment and downtown revitalization. Despite ongoing difficulties, the Village envisions a downtown that is better than ever by fostering opportunities for long-term growth. The downtown will become a place where residents and tourists can access all the area has to offer on foot or bicycle, from local businesses on Main Street to the waterfront via Station Hill Road, and past the downtown's limits to the West Point Museum and West Point Visitor Control Center. Along this journey, people can enjoy a continuous stretch of beautiful streetscapes and wayfinding signage offering directions to historic sites, parks, public art installations, and more, inspiring a thriving local business environment that expands opportunities for local employment both horizontally across employment types and vertically up and down the wage scale. Highland Falls' vision is to live up to its name of Hometown, USA, making it a place where tourists will want to visit, and residents will want to stay, owing to the support of the Village, its dedication to collaboration with residents, and its commitment to the community.

Past Investment and Future Potential

Highland Falls has an extensive history of successfully administering multiple projects funded through a range of grant programs. The majority of recent planning projects have served to inform this application. Past investments outlined in the Village's Comprehensive Plan include:

Highland Falls Village Comprehensive Plan Update (2022) – The Comprehensive Plan from 2009 is updated to include a vision for the future revitalization and development of the community, incorporating the recommendations of the 2020 Waterfront Revitalization Strategy.

Local Waterfront Revitalization Strategy (2020) – A grant from the NYS Department of State funded the Village's development of an LWRS. The Village conducted a series of resident outreach efforts that encompassed the geographic area of the Hudson River waterfront and downtown Highland Falls. This resulted in the collaboration of local officials, businesses, and residents, who came together to develop a revitalization strategy that informs this very application. Overall, the strategy created the foundation for organizing an approach to improve the public realm, making the Village a more attractive place to live and/or visit.

Project Implementation Strategy (2021) – This planning strategy follows up to the LWRS, offering detailed information on how to proceed with many projects listed in the LWRS and in accordance with ongoing initiatives within the central business district.

Main Street Improvements – A number of general Main Street improvements have been implemented over the past few years to: install new sidewalks, trees, and curb replacements (funded by a DOT multi-modal grant valued at \$200,000); general streetscape improvements valued at \$50,000, funded by the Village itself; pave streets with support from the DOT multi-modal grant (\$100,000); and install new LED lighting with assistance from a NYPA outright grant.

Building Construction and Renovations – Many public and private investments have been made throughout the Village including but not limited to eight Main Street building improvements and beautification project (\$540,000) funded by Restore NY and Orange County IDA, the purchase and renovation of the Senior Citizen Center through a DASNY grant and CDBG, and renovations to the Highland Falls Library also through a DASNY grant.

Parks and Public Space Improvements – The Village, through support of DASNY and West Point, has made multiple improvements to public park spaces and historic landmarks including Memorial Park (\$1 million), Ladycliff Park’s sidewalks and general improvements (\$1,080,000), Roe Park (\$1 million), and the Revolutionary War Preservation Project (\$12 million).

General Infrastructure Improvements – The Village has worked primarily with West Point to construct two parking garages (\$11 million total), renovate the James I. O’Neill High School infrastructure (\$30 million), renovate the Camp Natural Bridge (\$10 million), water plant renovation (\$5 million), and wastewater treatment plan renovation (\$25 million).

The Village of Highland Falls and West Point: Finding a Balance (2018) – An examination of the reasons why the Village has experienced stagnant growth despite the large visitor base to West Point, a significant supply of highly educated and industrious labor from West Point cadets, staff, and their families who live at or visit the Academy.

Highland Falls Waterfront Redevelopment Feasibility Study (2017) – A study prepared to determine redevelopment opportunities for the site of the historic train station and only public access point to the Hudson River.

Waterfront Development Project of Highland Falls – West Point Cadet Study (2017) - A study led by West Point cadets to develop scenarios for the redevelopment of the historic train station property on the Hudson River waterfront in the Village of Highland Falls.

Highlands: University of Pennsylvania, School of Design, Department of Landscape Architecture Green Stimuli Studio (2017) – Students from a graduate landscape architecture studio course at the University of Pennsylvania developed master plans for

public recreation areas and design concepts that improve local connections to the region's various water resources through scenic lookouts, trails, boardwalks, green spaces, and launch sites for canoes, kayaks, and small boats.

In all, the Village alone has independently invested over \$4.5 million towards developing and improving community infrastructure, parks, public spaces, and Main Street itself. Without the support of grants programs and partnering institutions, this work would not have been possible. Additionally, the current and previous rounds of DRI and NY Forward have brought together the community with West Point, the Village, and residents who have all expressed enthusiasm and a readiness to band together to achieve the overall vision. These efforts were undertaken by the Village through grants awarded by the DOS and the Hudson Valley Greenway as well as several rounds of public outreach and dialogue as the primary source for identification of revitalization needs and solutions.

Future Potential

The Village has cooperated regularly with its partners and residents to inform the development of projects, which have been enjoyed by students, residents, and visitors alike. Unfortunately, much of this work has been severely damaged by the major July 2023 storm, and the Village is now working with FEMA to complete over \$40M in repairs to essential infrastructure including roads, bridges, the water treatment plant, and the wastewater treatment plant. As the Village endeavors to recover, the Village seeks to create a bigger and better downtown Highland Falls through private investment, greener infrastructure, heightened visibility and pedestrian mobility, and a truly recognizable landscape within the historic Hudson Valley region.

The Village's previous public and private initiatives have provided a solid foundation to build toward future growth via new investment and expanded success. More specifically, the Village seeks to fulfill the MHREDC's overall vision to "Preserve an unparalleled quality of life for all Mid-Hudson Valley residents by creating a competitive, pro-business climate that cultivates a highly skilled, diverse workforce; encourages investment; nurtures entrepreneurship; promotes academic excellence and scientific discovery; fosters cluster development; fortifies infrastructure; advocates environmental stewardship; expands existing companies of all sizes, while attracting others from out-of-state—resulting in unprecedented employment and economic opportunities that reach beyond our region to benefit all New Yorkers."

Recent and Impending Job Growth

Downtown Highland Falls is home to a significant number of small businesses, about 66 of which are on Main Street alone. These offerings include a grocery store, barber shops, taverns, restaurants that offer dine-in and takeout options, banks and credit unions, a café, a public library, hardware shops, a florist, a laundromat, a dry cleaner, an automobile repair service, a farmer's market, and a senior citizens center. As it stands right now, the area is dominated by retail and local services, and there is a lack of specialty retail stores. For more variety, residents must travel to Cornwall or West Point, and some travel further to Woodbury Commons or Rockland County. However, through revitalization, the Village's will be able to broaden the diversity of these goods and

services to reinforce the visibility of these small businesses and expand the draw for residents and visitors to recognize the downtown region as a destination with much to offer.

The community's population has declined by over 5% between the 2010 and 2020 US Census. Of the current population, about 41.1% have a bachelor's degree or higher, and the median household income based on 2019 estimates was \$80,431, which was slightly below the town-wide median of \$90,384, with a poverty rate at about 8.6% in 2021. From 2015 through 2019, about 11 commercial properties changed ownership, resulting in a brief uptick in 2018 of commercial real estate sales that did not last. One of the sold properties included the former Pentagon Federal Credit Union building at 481 Main Street, which was vacant for a time since the credit union relocated to West Point. The structure is expected to be demolished to make room for a boutique hotel, and similar projects are underway throughout the downtown area now, increasing the local offerings of labor for residents and services for tourists.

West Point is among the top three most-visited tourist destinations in the state of New York. Annually, the academy sees about three million tourists each year. Because of this pre-existing tourism base, the Village anticipates a high success rate of attracting tourists after completing its revitalization. The proposed projects funded by the NY Forward Program will strengthen and reinforce the range of employment opportunities in downtown Highland Falls as it will expand demand for local commerce, broaden available goods and service offerings through mixed-use development, and implement a branding and marketing program that will inform tourists and visitors of the opportunities in the downtown region. Overall, the Village anticipates this use of funds through the NY Forward Program will increase local demand for goods and services and encourage the growth of the local economy for all.

Additionally, within the Village are several projects separate from this application that will directly result in the creation of employment opportunities. This includes two major projects: the Old Guard Hotel Project at 1610 Route 9W (valued at \$28 million) that will offer 132 rooms, an outdoor event deck, and food/beverage service, resulting in about 80 full-time jobs; and the conversion of a former historic church at 341 Main Street into a mixed-use building for a restaurant, offices, and apartments, creating about 21 full-time jobs.

Furthermore, the Village of Highland Falls is entering talks with neighboring municipality Cold Spring, located directly across the Hudson River, regarding the creation of a water taxi service. As the Village endeavors to open access to the waterfront, this project will serve to greatly improve tourism in the Mid-Hudson region altogether. Cold Spring is a regular New Yorker destination for its historic downtown beauty and accessibility to the Metro-North train system. As Cold Spring wishes to expand access for tourists to West Point, this future project will have lasting benefits supporting economic development throughout the region on both sides of the Hudson River.

If awarded, the Village will seek to move on projects that will complement current recovery efforts which are underway. When considered as a whole, the resulting development projects will offer a strong and sustainable base for the downtown to become an employment center, and in the future, fulfill Highland Falls' vision as a vital center for employment, residential living, and cultural enrichment within the great New York State.

Quality of Life

Highland Falls is ranked among the safest and most livable villages in New York State, and it holds the fifth position among the best places to live in Orange County. The greater Highland Falls region has access to stunning views of the Hudson River and Bear Mountain, several hiking trails, and more outdoor recreational opportunities. This offers the Village a strong foundation for improving its quality of life, however, there are still many limitations for the area. The Village is extremely constrained in terms of residential expansion, owing to the Village's position between West Point academy and the Hudson River. Downtown also lacks visibility in the area, and, therefore, is overlooked by visitors to West Point. This limits the economic opportunities within the Village, even though it has much to offer tourists, keeping the Village virtually in West Point's shadow when it can offer even more recreation to residents and tourists.

- **Housing** - Highland Falls has a larger share of households at the lower end of the economic spectrum in comparison to the Town of Highlands, but it is about the same as the county-wide proportion. Additionally, the Village recently acquired and renovated the first Highland Falls Senior Citizen Center, located at 15 Drew Avenue, to serve the Village's aging population and civic life as it offers space for food drives, public meetings, and public events.
- **Commercial and Retail Main Street Offerings** - Currently, downtown offers access to a plethora of public amenities and private businesses including the Highland Falls Public Library, local inns, "mom-and-pop motels," restaurants, and cafes. Projects that are underway in the project area are expanding offerings downtown. For example, the South Gate Flats Hotel and Spa at 479 Main Street will transform the entire block into a destination-style hotel and resort, adding to the local amenities that visitors and locals can enjoy.
- **Food Choices** – Main Street offers excellent food and drink options across a variety of cultures including Benny Havens Pub & Restaurant, Dong Fong Restaurant, Sushi King, Hacienda Restaurant, West Point Pizza, Andy's, World Class Grill, and several fast-food options.
- **Multi-Modal Transportation, Walkability and Bike-ability within the Downtown and connections** – Main Street is the center of commercial activity in the Village. About 50 properties in this area house commercial activities within walkable corridors. Pedestrians can easily navigate the Village Center through a network of sidewalks and walking paths connected to Main Street, but there is an opportunity to improve connections between adjacent residential neighborhoods and Main Street businesses where sidewalks are lacking, offer inadequate ADA-accessibility, and/or need repair. The Village also analyzed traffic patterns as part of the LWRS, which has informed this proposed project's scope to improve traffic flows between Main Street and West Point Highway.
- **Accessible recreational amenities, waterfront trails, parks and gathering spaces** – As it currently stands, the downtown area of Highland Falls offers easy access to a variety of recreational spaces. The Village contains key features that will be capitalized upon to establish a more tangible bond between the historic Main Street, West Point, and natural

resources, all within walking distance of each other. The focus area of this project is a crossroads for historic destinations including the Hudson River, Fort Montgomery State Historic Park, USMA West Point, and Bear Mountain State Park. These popular attractions are all easily accessible to pedestrians, and this NY Forward project will serve to improve accessibility, ADA-compliance, and visibility through wayfinding signs for visitors, ultimately establishing improved traffic flow across varying methods of transportation.

- **Access to healthcare facilities** – Downtown offers accessible facilities for medical care including Cornerstone Family Healthcare (127 Main Street), Horizon Family Medical Group (144 Main Street), and the Town of Highlands Ambulance Corps (35 Main Street).
- **Academic amenities** – Highland Falls offers three public school campuses including Fort Montgomery Elementary School, Highland Falls Intermediate School, and James I. O’Neill High School. The closest institutions of higher education include the USMA at West Point and Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh, NY.
- **Historic and Natural Resource offerings** – Highland Falls is home to several parks including Ladycliff Park, Veterans Memorial Park, Sgt. William Banks Memorial Park, Roe Park, and Hudson Highlands Park. Although the Village is highly walkable and is connected to major natural resources that offer beautification and recreational space, there is no current pedestrian access to the Hudson River waterfront owed to difficult terrain and topography. As Highland Falls sits directly adjacent to the waterfront, the Village plans to establish public access points by the historic retired train depot on Station Hill Road, open a new public waterfront park with two new parking areas beside the McDonald’s, open the train depot for commercial use, and establish a new marina and kayak launch with walking paths connecting to Downtown.
- **Community design and/or housing that caters to all ages** – The Village recently bought and renovated the Senior Citizen Center with assistance through a DASNY grant and CDBG grant. This has opened space to offer regular recreational engagement for the Village’s aging population as well as additional space for civic engagement. Additionally, there are several parks and playgrounds in the Village, offering a range of passive recreational opportunities for children and adults.
- **Citizenry and Local Participation** – Highland Falls’ citizenry is highly interactive with the local government throughout planning processes and decision-making processes. The Village currently has a Project Advisory Committee that is also supported by West Point.

Supportive Local Policies

The Village of Highland Falls recently completed an update to its Comprehensive Plan, which relied significantly on communal communication and participation with its citizens. This plan outlines the Village’s overall vision for establishing itself as a place of historical significance with amenities to support the local environment, residents, and visitors of all abilities in the area who are drawn to its historic and green spaces. This update also assisted the Village with reviewing the status of the Zoning Chapter, which is being updated according to recommendations found by the Comprehensive Plan, to ensure that land use regulations can meet the needs of current residents. Furthermore, the Village has utilized an innovative floating zone

to encourage redevelopment of key properties that offer mixed-uses in its Riverfront Development zone.

The Village's downtown area is already pedestrian accessible. However, this proposed project through this NY Forward program will enable the area to become more safely traversed by pedestrians, offer ADA-compliant modifications including wheelchair-accessible curbs on sidewalks, and improve wayfinding signage to direct residents and visitors to points of interest from West Point to the Hudson River and other historic sites scattered throughout and just beyond Highland Falls.

As a Compact Community in Orange County, the Village pledged to meet the five Hudson River Valley Greenway Criteria for natural and cultural resource protection, economic development, public access, regional planning, and heritage and environmental education. Additionally, the Village has taken the Climate Smart Community Pledge, so it is committed to decarbonizing the Village and adapting to climate change challenges by adhering to the NY State Climate Smart Communities Pledge.

Public Support

Beginning in 2019, the Village has held several public meetings and discussions inviting residents to weigh in on Highland Falls' DRI and NY Forward applications. This has opened channels of communication for the Village to ensure each application and its proposed projects continue to align with the evolving needs of the community. Public participation has become a popular staple in the community so much so that there was a need to establish a Project Advisory Committee, which is a group of interested citizens and government officials that have assembled to coordinate with citizens during the Village's LWRP and in preparation for all its current and previous DRI/NY Forward applications. As it relates to this application, the Village has continuously solicited public opinion through numerous engagements and maintained and updated the community's desires for future development since then.

On September 18, 2023, the Village hosted a roundtable talk in which participants were invited to weigh in on the application for the 2023 NY Forward program. The Village explained the DRI / NY Forward program to residents and reviewed the main ideas relating to the Village's goals through this program, which have been borne from previous public-facing planning initiatives. As a result, the vision presented by this application is a combination of the voices of the community with the new Comprehensive Plan and LWRP. Comments from this meeting and years past were taken into consideration for this application. In addition to local public support, the Village's biggest supporting partner is the USMA at Point, who shares in the Village's vision to unite the rich 219 years of West Point history with an authentic Hudson River village environment.

To prepare the vision which is embedded in this application, the Village has undertaken the following:

- Update of the Village Comprehensive Plan – Through 2021 and into early 2022, the Village undertook a redevelopment of the Village Comprehensive Plan through

several rounds of public meetings. The Village sought input from residents on the needs and objectives of the community. Downtown revitalization remains a concern for citizens, and the concepts discussed to achieve revitalization form the basis for the project opportunities described in this application.

- NY Forward Grant Application Meeting – The Village has held multiple meetings and workshops over the years to solicit feedback from residents concerning the objectives and projects of the NY Forward project. This meeting was last held on September 18, 2023 to solidify the continued public support for the application with further input on the strengths, needs, and opportunities that will benefit residents.
- Main Street Forum – In 2018 the Village conducted a forum to review the strengths, needs, and opportunities of the corridor of Main Street. Attendees included state and county officials, downtown business stakeholders, and residents. The forum focused on how local resources (natural and communal) could be utilized to support downtown revitalization.
- Development of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan – The Village received grant funding from the NY Department of State to support the development of a LWRP. The waterfront boundary included the downtown area as a whole due to its proximity. Public outreach during this major project yielded a list of prioritized strategic projects that informed each round of NY Forward and DRI applications.
- Petition in support of Revitalization for Downtown Highland Falls – In 2021, in preparation for the 2021 DRI application cycle, residents were given the opportunity to express their support for the downtown revitalization. To express this support, the Village formulated and established a petition made available for residents to sign in support of the program. Nearly 300 people signed.
- Update of the Village Ordinance – To ensure local policies were in place in preparation for this application, the Village revised the residential density requirement in its commercial district to enable the possibility of mixed land-use development contained within an appropriate level of residential density. This effort required a public hearing, and the Village solicited input from members of the Village Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. Based on this communication, the density was adjusted to allow for an updated level of residential occupancy in the downtown area.
- Village Website – The Village Website contains resources for the community to receive information and provide input. In addition to serving as an information portal during the development of this application, the website is in the process of transitioning into a new phase of usefulness with information on post-announcement activities, planning, and meetings associated with the NY Forward program.
- Letters of Support – The Village has received letters of support for Downtown Revitalization from stakeholders and businesspersons across the Village and the region including the Orange County Chamber of Commerce, Orange County Department of Planning, Schools for Highland Falls – Fort Montgomery Central School District, Village Historian, Hudson Valley Greenway, the Historic Thayer Hotel, Highland Arts Alliance, Congressman Sean P. Maloney, NY Assemblyman



Chris Eachus, the Village of Cold Spring, and the Palisades Interstate Park Commission.

These experiences have been continuously supported by residents who have participated throughout the planning process that has persisted for five

consecutive years. Despite its immediate storm-related recovery needs, the Village remains in the middle of a renaissance, with an enduring commitment to inclusive community planning. This has led to multiple project and initiative planning stemming from the interest and support from residents and stakeholders. Highland Falls has undergone significant planning efforts to support the development of this application and the vision of the Village’s future. The 2023 update of the Comprehensive Plan has given the Village the drive to continue pursuing funding to revitalize key elements of Downtown Highland Falls, and also look for ways to expand the Village within its densely populated location. These opportunities have given the Village a focused approach toward facilitating improvements that benefit the entire community and expand possibilities for future growth.

Transformative Project Opportunities

Although Highland Falls is seated between numerous tourist attractions including the USMA at West Point, Bear Mountain State Park, the Appalachian Trail, and more, the Village’s development since its inception has been eclipsed by these wonderful places. Instead of serving as an additional hub for tourists, people often drive through the Village to these destinations and back to their homes without stopping. This repeatedly missed opportunity to attract millions of visitors within the area to Highland Falls is a significant blunder for the local economy. As a result, the Village has identified multiple opportunities to expand its access, visibility, appeal, and offerings to both residents and tourists, all of which have informed this application and the projects described below.

To bolster the Village’s undertaking of downtown revitalization, the proposed development goals will maximize opportunities not yet taken advantage of within the Village and enable projects that will reenergize the downtown. Elements already contributing to the revitalization of the target area include the retention and expansion of job opportunities across a range of skill levels and job types, and introduction of new mixed-use land developments to offer a sustainable setting for work, living, and leisure/recreation activities. NY Forward’s support will be key to achieving the following projects:

Multi-modal improvements to enhance the flow and safety of traffic Downtown (\$2M). The Village will renovate and restore and improve sidewalks and pedestrian pathways along the Main Street corridor of the downtown area to enhance overall conditions for pedestrians. Likewise, it will also review the bikeability of the downtown, and consider necessary improvements. This will help drive foot traffic to the downtown based on accessibility and safety improvements alone.

Main Street façade renovations (\$3M), in which the Village will make long-overdue renovations to publicly accessible buildings including:

- 509 Main Street (South Gate Tavern): Awning shingles rotted and in need of paint.
- 501 and 503 Main Street (Thayer Leadership): Stucco is cracked and falling off.
- 441 Main Street: Stucco is falling off the left side of the building, paint is peeling, cement is cracking.
- 415 Main Street (West Point Tours): Paint is cracked and peeling.
- 419 Main Street (mixed-use building): Paint is cracked and peeling, cement is cracked.
- 421 Main Street (The Ice Cream Shoppe): Paint is cracked and peeling, cement is cracked.
- 327 Main Street: Bricks are cracked and missing, cement stairs are cracked and pieces missing, vacant storefront.
- 317 Main Street (Epic Robo-Spider Shop): Paint is faded, siding is cracked.



- 307 Main Street (Bear Mountain Bakery): Paint is chipped and peeling, cement is cracked, and brick work is chipped, cracked, and numerous holes formed in the bricks.



- 293 Main Street (Benny Havens Pub and Restaurant): Siding is cracked, paint is peeling and cracked, rotted wood.
- 285 Main Street (formerly Valley Floral Design): Vacant store front, siding is cracked and dirty.

- 273 Main Street (First Command Financial Advisors): Brick face is cracking, paint is cracked and peeling.
- 245 Main Street (Fatsis & Associates, PLLC): Right side of building stucco is missing, wood framing is exposed, deck railing spindles are missing. Front side of building has boarded up windows, peeling paint, and cracked stucco.
- 239 Main Street (formerly Service First Jewelry): Vacant store front, cracked stucco, rotted woodwork.
- 237 Main Street: Vacant store front, siding paint is peeling.
- 235 Main Street: Vacant store front, peeling paint.
- 260 Main Street: Missing window is partially boarded up.
- 270 Main Street: Two vacant store fronts, paint is cracked and peeling.
- 282 Main Street (West Point Pizza): Bricks are missing pointing, long cracks run through brick.
- 286 Main Street: Two empty store fronts, and bricks missing pointing.
- 292 Main Street: Siding paint chipping, siding has mold and rotted wood.
- 310 Main Street (formerly Treasures for Less Consignment Shop): One empty store front, wood trim paint peeling, cracked wood trim.

This project will establish an updated and uniform appearance across Main Street's exteriors, promoting the development of commercial and mixed-use spaces in a manner that unifies the Village's historic architecture. It is anticipated that this will make the downtown region stand out from the rest of the Village, and appeal more readily to all as a place to visit, shop, and overall enjoy.

Improve general branding and marketing of the downtown region (\$500K) to support local businesses that have been proven to struggle with advertising campaigns that can adequately compete with larger competitors. Wayfinding and signage will be established along updated sidewalks to help support navigation without the need to rely on technology, drawing attention to local historic sites.

Expansion of Access to the waterfront via Station Hill Road (\$1M). The Village hopes to offer unprecedented public access to the Hudson River through the creation of walking paths connected to the downtown and two new parking lots, which will be established beside existing open lots adjacent to McDonald's on Station Hill Road. The Village, in an undertaking separate from the NY Forward project, also plans to redevelop an underutilized historic train depot on Station Hill Road to increase local business opportunities while retaining its local history and color. The waterfront redevelopment project is informed by the previously completed LWRP, and it will revitalize the Village's sole waterfront access point into a publicly accessible park with a pier for small and large craft access. Furthermore, the Village is currently in talks with the neighboring municipality of Cold Spring to establish a water taxi network to expand tourist opportunities on both sides of the Hudson River.

The projects funded by NY Forward will support the following elements of the Mid-Hudson Economic Development Region's vision:

- Create a pro-business environment through providing new and/or renovated spaces for new businesses and jobs, improving infrastructure, and expanding cultural events and community activities.
- Attract and cultivate a highly skilled workforce through the new and expanding businesses in downtown Highland Falls from the investment of NY Forward funding, which will create a diverse range of job opportunities across employment sectors.
- Encourage investment by inspiring private investment in real property utilizing sustainable, smart-growth construction and renovation practices and building materials. Access to these funds will also leverage ancillary investments in other forthcoming projects downtown, in adjacent neighborhoods, and in commercial districts.
- Nurture entrepreneurship through the creation of new spaces for commercial and office use at a range of affordability that can attract new startup businesses and existing microenterprises seeking their next generation of growth.
- Foster cluster development through utilizing infill strategies and adaptively reusing existing historic building stock.
- Fortify infrastructure by accessing planned capacities for sewer and water, infilling the pedestrian system to provide walkable connectivity through the downtown area.

- Advocate environmental stewardship through infill of vacant urban parcels, renovation of existing buildings resulting in decarbonization and preservation of energy, less dependency on carbon-fueled vehicles through increased pedestrian mobility and more conveniently located and accessible EV charging stations.
- Expand existing companies and grow employment and economic opportunities through construction of new development on infill parcels and renovation of existing buildings. The resulting increase in economic activities will improve the activities of existing companies that will grow and flourish, create new jobs from the incoming new businesses and expanding existing businesses, and open unprecedented opportunities for economic growth among all businesses and employees in the area.

Administrative Capacity

Although it is a small government, the Village of Highland Falls has an excellent foundation through its supportive capacity for developing, implementing, and finalizing public projects. The Village's elected leaders, officials, and its citizens have collaborated often on similar projects that have strengthened many modes of communication throughout all areas of the Village.

The Village has received funding in the past from federal, state, and local programming, which has led to the creation of the Senior Citizen Center (\$350,000) and the renovation of Highland Falls Public Library (\$82,000), School district capital projects (\$20 million), James I. O'Neill High School (\$30 million), Memorial Park improvements (\$1 million), and many more projects and development planning. Most recently, the Village has completed its 2023 update to the Village Comprehensive plan and LWRS, both of which have served as a major backbone for this application. All this has established the Village's successful history of planning, executing, and finalizing major projects in a range of categories. This has further bestowed experience upon the Village for collaborating within its government as well as with contractors, homeowners, Village Boards, and the federal government. All Village officials are in support of this NY Forward Application and are ready to implement the strategic investments outlined previously to foster the possibility of future, sustainable growth.

As the chief elected official, Mayor D'Onofrio will serve as the primary contact for all activities associated with the administration of the NY Forward grant, if successfully awarded. The Mayor will be assisted by Lynae Mesaris, the Village Clerk. Additional support and assistance will be supplied through the nine employees that make up the staff at Village Hall, and the long-standing partners from the Planning and Development Department for Orange County. The administrative qualifications of the Village are further evidenced by the successful administration of past and current grant programs such as those offered by the New York Department of State, Restore NY, DASNY, CDBG, the DOT Multi-Modal grant, and NYPA outright grant.



highlandsartsalliance.org | highlandsartsalliance@gmail.com

September 25, 2023

Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council
33 Airport Center Drive
New Windsor, NY 12553

Dear Program Staff,

I am writing to express my support for the Village of Highland Falls' NY Forward application. As someone who grew up in the Town of Highlands, I was keenly aware of how the local economy—reliant on West Point tourism—was impacted by the horrific attacks on September 11th, 2001. With visitor restrictions in place, tourism effectively dried up, and the Highlands community suffered as a whole. More recently, the torrential rains and resulting floods of July 9th, 2023 brought a new level of devastation and set of challenges the town must deal with.

However, I am pleased to see the Town of Highlands, including the Village of Highland Falls, has been enjoying its own budding “renaissance” in recent years.

Residents of the Village are determined to raise awareness of all the area has to offer. Despite its best efforts, the Village could use assistance to prop itself up to successfully compete with neighboring communities that draw more tourists and have stronger economies as a result.

The Village of Highland Falls and the hamlet of Fort Montgomery both possess a small-town charm that is deceptively quaint. The area, in fact, is rich with history dating back before and during the American Revolution. The United States Military Academy at West Point is the best-known site, but this area also contains remnants of Forts Clinton and Montgomery, Bear Mountain State Park, hiking trails—including a portion of the Appalachian Trail—and stunning Hudson River views.

The funding provided through this program would help revitalize tourism and the local economy by helping the Village update and capitalize on its strengths. The Village's proximity to the Hudson River offers great potential for open waterfront space with marina access, which the Village plans to establish if successfully awarded NY Forward funding. Additionally, funding to establish improved walkability features with ADA-compliance would be an excellent draw for tourists of all abilities. So too would a street beautification project encourage tourists to stroll through the area, discovering all it has to offer on foot instead of relying on vehicular transportation.

The Village of Highland Falls is working to establish its own identity, and I believe it has more to offer than meets the eye. A grant such as this will unlock the Village's potential to become the next attractive and successful destination along the Hudson River.

Sincerely,

Jay LeRoy
Founder / Director
Highland Arts Alliance

September 29, 2023

Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council
33 Airport Center Drive
New Windsor, NY 12553

Dear Program Staff,

As Village Historian for the Town of Highlands, I would like to express my utmost support for the Village of Highland Falls' NY Forward application to revitalize the downtown region. The proposed project will incorporate the area's rich history and help the Village rebuild its image after the disastrous July 2023 flash floods that caused significant damage to private and public property. Although the Village was incorporated only in 1906, the region overall is inundated with remarkable local history. Nearby West Point, for one, was a critical location for General George Washington, who identified this location as a critical spot on the Hudson River during the American Revolution. This site later became the famed United States Military Academy at West Point, drawing in about three million tourists each year.

Highland Falls is a former mill town that grew beside an impressive waterfall flowing into the Hudson River. In its past, the Village has had several large hotels that were visited by former US presidents, including Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant. Additionally, the Village is considered the "Historic Gateway to West Point," which has educated various famous figures including former US President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Ulysses S. Grant, American poet Edgar Allen Poe, the presidents of Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and the Philippines, and about 76 Medal of Honor recipients.

Helping this community appreciate its history and relevance in association with its neighbors and the present is the overall mission of the Historical Society. Increasing the awareness of this history by capturing it within the downtown area will help foster local pride and draw in visitors, overall increasing local commerce while educating residents and visitors on the region's legacy. Within and adjacent to the downtown project region are several historic sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places, such as the Church of the Holy Innocents (112 Main Street), Highland Falls Railroad Depot (Dock Road), Highland Falls Village Hall (Main Street), and several more.

With this in mind, I would like to express my support as the Village Historian and on behalf of the Town of Highlands Historical Society. The designers of this project recognize the importance of establishing vibrant downtowns with "various sizes, character, history, needs, and challenges." By creating a more unified aesthetic across buildings downtown, capturing the history of the region, the Village will be creating a more unique identity that will draw more residents and visitors to the region and preserve local history while establishing a stronger future for generations to come.

Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronnie Coffey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Ronnie Coffey

Village Historian, Highland Falls, NY



HIGHLAND FALLS-FORT MONTGOMERY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mr. Michael McElduff, Superintendent of Schools

September 15, 2023

Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council
33 Airport Center Drive
New Windsor, NY 12553

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Schools for Highland Falls – Fort Montgomery Central School District as the Superintendent of Schools. I believe that my support of this initiative is of great significance in consideration of the Village's New York Forward proposal.

This proposal contains several elements that will support the economic and social development of the community, which will trickle down to benefit the children and schools in the area. The proposal contains a variety of public improvement programs and several initiatives and programs that will foster responsible growth and the development of this community. In addition, this proposal includes plans for development and rehabilitation of existing buildings in the downtown area, which is bordered by several public schools. Improving the walkability of this region will overall improve the safety of children walking and biking to and from school, as well as those who utilize school buses in the downtown region.

The Village of Highland Falls stands to benefit greatly from this initiative, especially considering the recent losses endured by the major storm and subsequent flooding on July 9th, 2023. This proposed work will not only help polish the reconstruction of this area, but also expand job opportunities for residents as well as individuals from surrounding communities. This plan will promote the community as a positive place to visit and, more importantly, to raise one's family. Further, this plan will support veterans and promote educational and cultural development in one of the most beautiful and historic places along the Hudson River.

If awarded funding, this project will improve the outdated and damaged appearance of the downtown area which, like so many in the region, have seen a decline over the past few decades from economic transformation and disastrous weather events. Successful implementation of this project that has been revised adapted over several years of determined application will enhance the quality of life for all residents in the Village, providing opportunities that other communities already enjoy.

I believe that the Village of Highland Falls' NY Forward Initiative will positively impact the entire community. It will certainly go a long way toward transforming the Village into a vibrant community where more people will want to live, work, and raise their families. Accordingly, I write in support of this application.

Thank you for your attention on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or clarifications relative to this letter.

Kind regards,



September 29, 2023

Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council
33 Airport Center Drive
New Windsor, NY 12553

To Whom it May Concern,

Please accept this letter as evidence of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission's (PIPC) strong support for the Village of Highland Falls' application for funding through the New York Forward program. PIPC is fortunate to have a great neighbor in Highland Falls and is supportive of their request in light of the major damage we both sustained as a result of the July 9th, 2023 storm.

Perhaps no municipality was impacted by this storm more dramatically than Highland Falls, making support from this program particularly significant. This proposal would help further reconstruction within the Village while providing job opportunities for residents and individuals from surrounding communities. The Village's project will promote the community as a positive place to visit and raise a family. Further, this plan will support veterans and promote educational and cultural development in one of the Hudson Valley' most beautiful and historic places.

As a neighbor to the Village of Highland Falls, the PIPC would benefit from an improved downtown and enhanced community center. We serve many residents from the Village in our parks and work with the community to respond to challenges like storms and fires and to plan community events and programs. Increasing the quality of life in Highland Falls and supporting a vibrant downtown will serve the more than 4 million annual visitors to Bear Mountain State Park. These visitors seek places to have lunch, buy hiking and camping supplies, stay overnight, and more. With support from the NY Forward program, Highland Falls will be better positioned to take advantage of these tourism dollars and further their efforts to improve their community.

Thank you for considering this application. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at lairdj@pipc.org.

Kind regards,

Joshua R. Laird,
Executive Director

PALISADES INTERSTATE
PARK COMMISSION
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
3006 Seven Lakes Drive
P.O. Box 427
Bear Mountain, NY 10911-0427
(845) 786-2701



Steven M. Neuhaus
County Executive

Amanda Dana
Director of Tourism

September 29, 2023

Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council
33 Airport Center Drive
New Windsor, NY 12553

Dear Interim Executive Director,

Please accept this letter of support for the Village of Highland Falls' application for the Empire State Development New York Forward proposal.

The Village of Highland Falls has always been an incredible asset in tourism especially as it is nestled just outside the gates of one of the most iconic Military establishments in the country. Thousands of people pass through the Village daily and many of them look to frequent stores and shops in the downtown. The Village of Highland Falls stands to benefit greatly from the New York Forward grant initiative, especially considering the recent losses endured by the major storm and subsequent flooding on July 9th, 2023. This proposed work will not only help polish the reconstruction of this area, but also expand job opportunities for residents as well as individuals from surrounding communities. This plan will promote the community as a positive place to visit while fostering opportunities for the youth to build careers. Further, this plan will support veterans and promote educational and cultural development in one of the most beautiful and historic places along the Hudson River.

If awarded funding, this project will improve the infrastructure and appearance of the downtown area which, like so many in the region, have seen a decline over the past few decades from economic transformation and disastrous weather events. Successful implementation of this project will enhance the quality of life for all residents in the Village, providing opportunities that other communities already enjoy.

I strongly encourage Empire State Development to invest in the Village of Highland Falls through the NY Forward process as we are confident that this will undoubtedly bring new economic vitality into the Town and Village of Highlands.

Sincerely,

Amanda Dana
Director of Tourism & Film



Steven M. Neuhaus
County Executive

Orange County Department of Planning

124 Main Street
Goshen, NY 10924-2124
Tel: (845) 615-3840
Fax: (845) 291-2533

Alan J. Sorensen, AICP
Commissioner

www.orangecountygov.com/planning
planning@orangecountygov.com

September 21, 2023

Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council
33 Airport Center Drive
New Windsor, NY 12553

Dear Program Staff,

It is my pleasure to support the Village of Highland Falls' 2023 application to the NY Forward Program.

The goals of the NY Forward program to revitalize downtowns and stimulate local and regional economies through said reinvigoration of downtown destinations are important and relevant to Orange County Planning's ongoing work. Through developing a multitude of synergistic projects including building façade renovations, installing improved pedestrian routes, and reforming an underutilized historic landmark for creating waterfront access, the Village will have ample support for an inclusive and informed strategy for smart growth and critical infrastructure and planning. We also approve of the thoughtful implementation of recommendations made to the Comprehensive Master Plan, the Orange County Resilience Plan, and the Orange County Military Installation Resiliency Study.

To support this proposed project, we are committed to offering information related to prospective economic development, open space, placemaking and non-motorized initiatives and infrastructure. We will also provide other information or support, if and where needed.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of the Village of Highland Falls' request.

Sincerely,

Alan J. Sorensen, AICP
Commissioner of Planning



KEVIN M. BURKE
Chair
Greenway Conservancy

Hudson River Valley Greenway

MEG DOWNEY
Chair
Greenway Council

SCOTT KELLER
Executive Director



September 18, 2023

Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council
33 Airport Center Drive
New Windsor, NY 12553

Dear Program Staff,

On behalf of the Hudson River Valley Greenway, it is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the Village of Highland Falls' proposal to the NY Forward Program for improvements to its downtown.

The Village of Highland Falls, in the historic and beautiful Hudson River Valley, lies between two major tourist attractions: Bear Mountain State Park and the United States Military Academy at West Point. Owing to this geography, Highland Falls is a perfect candidate to benefit from the NY Forward Program, which aims to rejuvenate the downtowns of smaller communities. The Village's Main Street corridor is a major thoroughfare that provides walkable and drivable routes to and from the Academy and downtown business district. The award of this application will offer future investments to help establish infrastructure growth and support the Village with resources to expand its potential for further revitalization. With NY Forward support, the Village will be able to spur economic growth, build a cultural gathering spot, and establish a steppingstone to benefit this municipality and those throughout the Hudson Valley region.

The Hudson River Valley Greenway and Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area were established in large part to preserve and promote the natural and cultural resources and historic places within the Hudson River Valley. Our organization supports novel collaborative efforts between residents, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private partners to interpret and celebrate the nationally significant history of our region. In addition to the tangible benefits of these preservation efforts, our activities are essential in promoting a popular appreciation for these historical and cultural sites to both residents and visitors alike, encouraging vital public stewardship, and supporting the tourism economy locally and regionally.

The project is in keeping with the mission of the Hudson River Valley Greenway and the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. Therefore, this application has our full support.

Sincerely,

Scott Keller
Executive Director



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

COMMITTEES
Aging
Higher Education
Local Governments
Mental Health
Veterans' Affairs

September 22, 2023

Linda Malave
Regional Director
Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council
33 Airport Center Drive
New Windsor, NY 12553

Dear Ms. Malave:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Village of Highland Falls' 2023 application for the NY Forward Program.

I represent the 99th District of the New York State Assembly, which includes the Village of Highland Falls. The Village was hit with a once-in-a-thousand-year storm in July of this year that devastated our region: leading to the destruction of residences, businesses, and severely endangering my constituents. The storm also took the lives of one of my constituents, a pain that is still felt in the community to this day.

The Village has gone through incredible tragedy, banded together as a community, and has done remarkable work in rebuilding the town stronger than ever before. In line with that mission, the Village is seeking funding through the NY Forward Program to redefine and redevelop its downtown area to provide opportunities for hometown stores, cafes, and more to be supported locally, making it attractive for long-term operation and promoting future, smart-growth, and sustainability. This is a project made with not just economic incentives in mind, but also with unmatched emotional tenacity, a statement that no challenge or tragedy is too great to overcome.

Outside of the direct impacts this will have for the Village, this project will ultimately attract tourists and spurs economic impacts for Orange County and the Mid-Hudson Valley Region altogether, resulting in a community effort toward building a more sustainable future for residents, businesses, visitors, families, environment, and all others who make up the community. With the US Military Academy at West Point nearby, and unique access to the Hudson River, Highland Falls is best situated for economic success that will reverberate around the area.

It is for these above reasons that I strongly support Highland Falls application for the NY Forward Program, and respectfully request that it is viewed favorably. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office at eachusc@nyassembly.gov or 845-469-6929.

Sincerely,

Christopher W. Eachus
Assemblymember, 99th District

FROM THE DESK OF
CONGRESSMAN PAT RYAN

September 29, 2023
Linda Malave, Regional Director
Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council
33 Airport Center Drive
New Windsor, NY 12553

Dear Director Malave,

I am writing to express my support of the application submitted by the Village of Highland Falls to the 2023 NY Forward Program.

The Village of Highland Falls is located in the historic and beautiful Hudson River Valley, between the two major tourist attractions of Bear Mountain State Park and the United States Military Academy at West Point. The Village is a perfect community to benefit from the NY Forward Program, which aims to rejuvenate downtowns of smaller communities.

The Village's Main Street corridor is a major thoroughfare that provides walkable and drivable routes to and from the Academy and downtown business areas. Award of their application will offer future investments to help create economic growth and support the Village with resources to further expand its potential for revitalization.

As you are aware, the Village sustained substantial damage to private property and public infrastructure as a result of severe flooding in early July. In addition to rejuvenating the Main Street corridor, a NY Forward award would also help this community recover by leveraging continued private investment to rebuild after a devastating summer.

Therefore, I ask that you give your full and fair consideration to this request. Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter, as both are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Pat Ryan
Member of Congress

CHAIR
INVESTIGATIONS & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

COMMITTEES
CORPORATIONS, AUTHORITIES & COMMISSIONS
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
FINANCE
JUDICIARY
LABOR
LOCAL GOVERNMENT



**SENATOR
JAMES SKOUFIS**
42ND SENATORIAL DISTRICT
STATE OF NEW YORK

ALBANY OFFICE:
ROOM 815
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ALBANY, NY 12247
OFFICE: 518-455-3290

DISTRICT OFFICE:
45 QUAKER AVE., STE. 202
CORNWALL, NY 12518
OFFICE: 845-567-1270

e-mail:
skoufis@nysenate.gov

September 29, 2023

Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council
33 Airport Center Drive
New Windsor, NY 12553

Dear Program Staff,

I am writing to express my support of the application submitted by the Village of Highland Falls to the 2023 NY Forward Program.

The Village of Highland Falls is located in the historic and beautiful Hudson River Valley, between the two major tourist attractions of Bear Mountain State Park and the United States Military Academy at West Point. The Village is a perfect community to benefit from the NY Forward Program, which aims to rejuvenate downtowns of smaller communities.

The Village's Main Street corridor is a major thoroughfare that provides walkable and drivable routes to and from the Academy and downtown business areas. Award of their application will offer future investments to help create economic growth and support the Village with resources to further expand its potential for revitalization. With the Program's support, the Village's Downtown will be able to act as a regional draw by building an attractive cultural gathering spot and forming a stepping stone to not only benefit this municipality, but also others throughout the Hudson Valley region.

Therefore, I ask that you give your full and fair consideration to this request. Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter, as both are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Skoufis". The signature is stylized and cursive.

James Skoufis
New York State Senate, District 42

NYS Consolidated Funding Application # 132957
Organization Name: Village of Highland Falls
Project Name: NY Forward Application
City: Highland Falls **State:** NY

Created on
September 29, 2023 - 01:00 PM
Application finalized on
September 29, 2023 - 12:56 PM

Region

Mid-Hudson

Questionnaire Questions & Answers

Location

New York Forward (NYF)

Q_3527 US Congressional District where the project is located. (This question's value will be filled automatically, based on the project address, when the application is finalized.)

18

Q_928 Project Street Address: Please input the project street address (**Street Number and Street Name only**).

If the project has multiple locations, please input the primary street address of the project. If the project does not have a definite street address, please input the approximate street address of the project (Street Number and Street Name only).

Main Street

Q_565 Project City

Highland Falls

Q_972 Project county or counties.

Orange

Q_568 Project State

NY

Q_572 Project Latitude (This question's value will be filled automatically, based on the project address, when the application is finalized.)

41.373405

Q_573 Project Longitude (This question's value will be filled automatically, based on the project address, when the application is finalized.)

-73.963840

Q_184 NYS Assembly District where the project is located. (This question's value will be filled automatically, based on the project address, when the application is finalized.)

99

Q_190 NY Senate District where the project is located. (This question's value will be filled automatically, based on the project address, when the application is finalized.)

42

Q_1034 Project ZIP Code. (please use ZIP+4 if known)

10928

Q_616 For more than one project location, please provide full address(es) for each location. If Not Applicable, indicate "NA".

NA

Basic

General Project Information

Applicant

	Answer
Organization Legal Name	Village of Highland Falls
Applicant First Name	Joseph
Applicant Last Name	D'Onofrio
Street Address	303 Main Street
City	Highland Falls
State	NY
Zip Code (use ZIP+4 if known)	10928
Telephone Number (include area code)	845-446-3828
Email Address	MayorJoe@ highlandfallsny.org

Contacts

	Primary Contact	Contact Authorized to Execute Contract if Awarded	Additional Contact
Salutation	<i>No Answer</i>	<i>No Answer</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
First Name	Joseph	Joseph	Lynae
Last Name	D'Onofrio	D'Onofrio	Mesaris
Title	Mayor	Mayor	Village Clerk
Organization	Village of Highland Falls	Village of Highland Falls	Village of Highland Falls
Street Address	303 Main Street	303 Main Street	303 Main Street
City	Highland Falls	Highland Falls	Highland Falls
State	NY	NY	NY
ZIP Code	10928	10928	10928
Telephone Number	845-446-3828	845-446-3828	845-446-3400
Email Address	MayorJoe@highlandfallsny.org	MayorJoe@highlandfallsny.org	Imesaris@highlandfallsny.org

Certification

New York Forward (NYF)

General Certifications

Q_1037 By entering your name in the box below, you certify and agree that you are authorized on behalf of the applicant and its governing body to commit the applicant to comply with the requirements of Article 15-A of the New York State Executive Law: Participation By Minority Group Members and Women With Respect To State Contracts by providing opportunities for Minority-owned Business Enterprise (MBE)/Woman-owned Business Enterprise (WBE) participation. You further certify that the applicant will maintain such records and take such actions necessary to demonstrate such compliance throughout the completion of the project.

Joseph D'Onofrio

Q_1038 By entering your name in the box below, you certify that you are authorized on behalf of the applicant and its governing body to submit this application. You further certify that all of the information contained in this Application and in all statements, data and supporting documents which have been made or furnished for the purpose of receiving assistance for the project described in this application, are true, correct and complete to the best of your knowledge and belief. You acknowledge that offering a written instrument knowing that the written instrument contains a false statement or false information, with the intent to defraud the State or any political subdivision, public authority or public benefit corporation of the State, with the knowledge or belief that it will be filed with or recorded by the State or any political subdivision, public authority or public benefit corporation of the State, constitutes a

crime under New York State Law.

Joseph D'Onofrio

Net New Jobs

No job answers necessary due to your associated programs.

Qualified Investments

No investment answers necessary due to your associated programs.
No funding or budget answers necessary due to your associated programs.

Attachment Questions & Answers

New York Forward (NYF)

NY Forward (NYF): Application

Q_14229 Submit your NY Forward (NYF) application as one pdf.

Highland Falls - NY Forward.pdf
[Download](#)

NY Forward (NYF): Map

Q_14230 Submit one map to scale, delineating the proposed NY Forward (NYF) project area.

Highland Falls NYF Map.pdf
[Download](#)

Legend

[x] = Expired Program