



City of Utica: Downtown Revitalization Initiative Round 4

DESCRIPTION

The City of Utica is located western border of Oneida County, and is commonly referred to as the “Gateway to the Adirondacks.” For decades, the City endured economic decline, private sector disinvestment stemming from suburbanization, and the decline of the City’s manufacturing industry. However, the City is also home to a substantial immigrant and refugee population, creating a culturally rich environment. MRB Group, in partnership with Elan Planning, worked with City and State representatives to develop a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) with the ultimate goal of revitalizing downtown Utica. Round 4 of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative was a state grant award of \$10 million to induce projects that expand the City’s live, work, and play assets.

Through public engagement, market analysis, and strategic planning, the consultant team facilitated development of a recommendation for the DRI grant allocation. MRB Group, led by Michael N’dolo, provided economic development services to the interdisciplinary consultant team. MRB Group assisted in facilitating public engagement and feedback from the immigrant and refugee populations of the City to ensure that their ideas and needs were considered in this extensive revitalization effort. MRB Group’s commercial and residential market analysis also provided crucial insights that helped the Local Planning Committee determine the feasibility and transformative potential of the proposed projects on Downtown Utica. Projects that were identified and subsequently recommended for funding advanced the City’s goals of People, Place, and Purpose.

SERVICES

- Revitalization strategic planning
- Stakeholder engagement, including underserved populations
- Market analysis
- Financial feasibility analysis
- Negotiations with property owners
- Project design
- Committee meeting facilitation

RESULTS

Upon completion of the planning process, the City's priority projects were approved and the SIP was submitted to the state. Many of the projects identified for substantive economic development potential have been selected for funding and have progressed into design and construction. The City's urban core is expected to realize true revitalization as measured by jobs creation, low vacancy rates, and continued investment.

CONTACT

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