

Victor NY Forward Public Workshop 1 & Application Info Session

Victor Early Childhood School
August 6, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Attendees

- Approximately 20 community members
- Several LPC members

Project Team:

- Melissa Keller, Department of State (DOS) Project Manager
- Greg Parker, Empire State Development (ESD)
- Kimberly Baptiste, Colliers Engineering & Design Project Manager
- Jeanette Petti, Colliers Engineering & Design
- Emma Fisher, Colliers Engineering & Design

Welcome and Introductions

Kimberly Baptiste, project manager with Colliers Engineering & Design (Colliers), welcomed participants to the informational session and thanked them for their interest in the NY Forward program. She explained that Colliers is the lead consultant helping the Village of Victor facilitate the NY Forward program, with support from other subject matter experts and representatives from multiple New York State (NYS) agencies.

What is the NY Forward Program?

Kimberly began the informational session by providing some background on the NY Forward program. She explained that NY Forward is a New York State program designed to invigorate and enliven downtowns in New York's small towns and hamlets. This round, the program is infusing a total of \$200 million in communities across New York State between the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) and NY Forward programs. The Village of Victor has been awarded \$4.5 million as part of the NY Forward program to plan and implement transformative projects downtown.

The NY Forward program has multiple goals, including:

1. Enhancing downtown living and quality of life
2. Creating an active downtown with a mix of uses
3. Providing diverse employment opportunities for a variety of skillsets and salary levels
4. Creating diverse housing options for all incomes
5. Providing public spaces that serve all ages and abilities



6. Encouraging the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions
7. Growing the local property tax base

Projects to receive NY Forward funding will be identified through a multi-month planning process. The planning process began in June and will conclude in early 2027 with the completion of the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP), which is the report that documents the planning process and recommends to New York State which projects the community believes have the most potential to positively impact downtown Victor. The State will review the SIP and determine which projects will receive funding from the \$4.5 million allocation. NY Forward grant awards will be announced tentatively in Summer 2027, with project implementation to follow.

Kimberly explained that Victor's NY Forward planning process will be led by the Local Planning Committee (LPC), with assistance from a Project Team of industry experts and representatives from multiple New York State agencies. The LPC is a group of community members selected by NYS and local leaders to lead Victor's NY Forward planning process and to determine which projects have the most potential to bring transformative change to downtown Victor. LPC members represent a diverse segment of the Victor community, from business owners, to residents, to local officials. They are required to act in the public interest and to adhere to a Code of Conduct. LPC members who have a conflict of interest with a proposed project must recuse themselves from discussing or voting on that project. LPC members volunteer their time.

The LPC will evaluate all proposed projects based on a set of established criteria and determine which projects to include in the SIP. Projects can be proposed by the Village of Victor as well as by community members. Kimberly emphasized that not all proposed projects will be included in Victor's Strategic Investment Plan. Similarly, not all projects included in the SIP will receive NY Forward funding. Ultimately, New York State will make the final decision on which projects are funded.

Open Call for Projects

Kimberly explained that community members can submit project proposals through the Open Call for Project Applications. Any private, non-profit, and public entity can submit. Applicants must complete the Project Application Form and answer basic questions about their proposed project. Applications are available for download at VictorNYForward.com or for pick-up at the Village Hall (60 E. Main Street, Victor, NY 14564). **All Project Applications are due by Monday, August 31, 2026 at 4:00 PM.** The LPC will evaluate all received applications and decide which projects to recommend to New York State for potential funding. New York State will make the final decision on which projects receive NY Forward funding. *It is important to note that not all applications will receive funding.*



Know Before You Apply

- **No guarantee of funding.** Not all project applications will be recommended for funding. In addition, not all projects recommended for funding will receive NY Forward awards. Final funding decisions will be made by New York State.
- **Reimbursement program.** Grant funds will not be released to the project sponsor until the full scope of the project is completed. This means that project sponsors may need to finance the total project cost using a bridge loan, owner equity, or other financing mechanism. *Project sponsors cannot begin work on their projects until funding awards have been announced. Any work completed before funding awards are announced is not eligible for reimbursement.*
- **Match required.** This is a matching grant program, meaning that some level of match will be required. Projects that provide higher match amounts will be more competitive for funding.
- **NYS compliance.** Projects must follow all New York State rules, including MWBE utilization, competitive procurement for goods and services, and project status reporting.

Eligibility Criteria

NY Forward funds will only be awarded to capital projects that transform downtown Victor in ways that will benefit current residents and future generations. In order to be eligible for funding through the NY Forward program, projects must be one of the following eligible project types:

- **New development.** New construction for mixed-use, commercial, residential, not-for-profit, or public uses.
- **Redevelopment or rehabilitation of an existing downtown building.** Redevelopment or rehabilitation of an existing downtown building for mixed-use, commercial, residential, not-for-profit, or public uses.
- **Public improvement projects.** Projects that improve the public realm such as park, public space, or streetscape improvements.
- **Downtown branding and marketing projects.** Projects that promote downtown to residents, visitors, investors, and/or developers such as signage or promotional materials.
- **Small projects.*** Projects less than \$75,000 in total cost. Eligible activities include minor renovations, business assistance, soft costs, and public art. For applicants proposing small projects, the LPC is seeking Letters of Interest to demonstrate support for establishing a Small Project Fund in the future. If a Small Project Fund is established, small project applicants will need to complete another round of applications to be considered for funding.

**Small project applicants only need to fill out the Small Project Letter of Interest form at the end of the Project Application document (Pages 16-18).*

The following project types are ineligible for NY Forward funding:

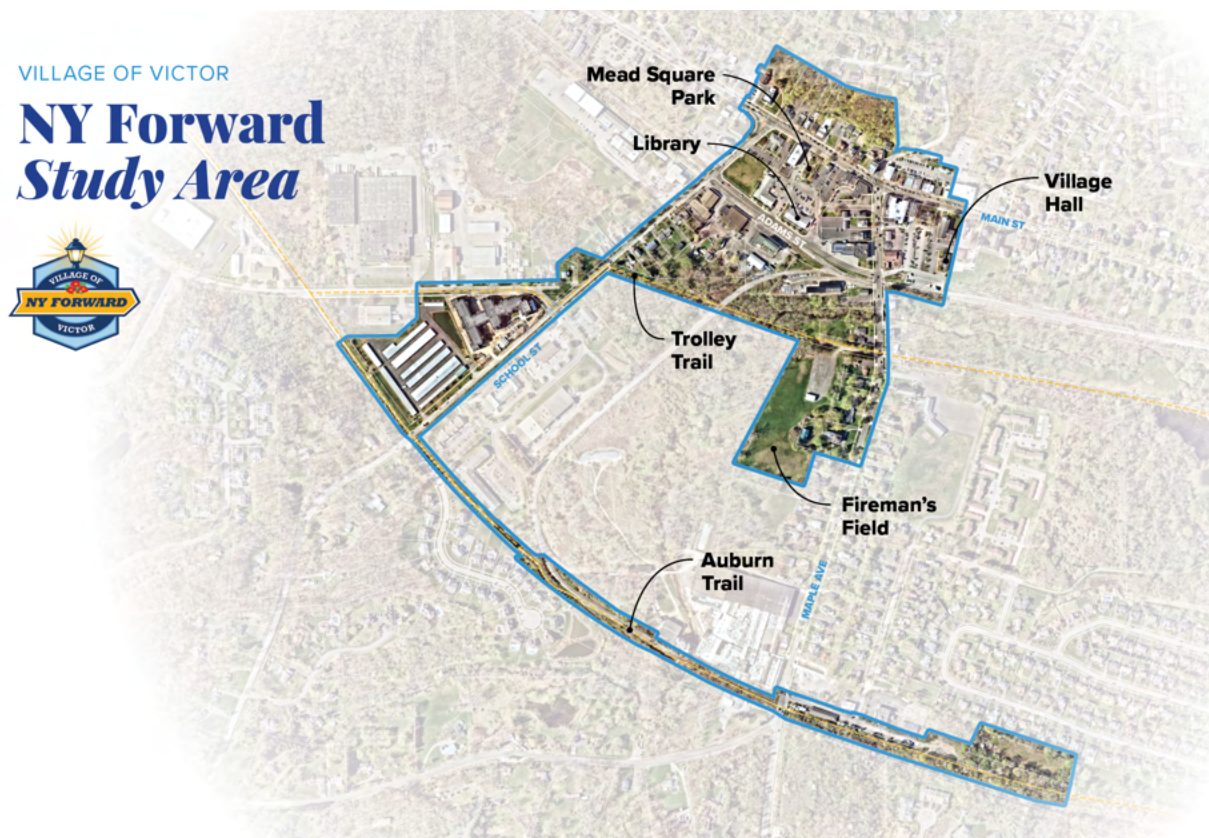
- **Planning activities.** NY Forward funds cannot be used for planning or feasibility studies.
- **Operations and maintenance.** NY Forward funds cannot be used for on-going or routine expenses, such as salaries and wages, rent, utilities, or property up-keep.



- **Pre-award costs.** NY Forward funds cannot be used to reimburse costs that were already incurred prior to the announcement of NY Forward funding awards.
- **Property acquisition.** NY Forward funds cannot be used for property acquisition. The cost of property acquisition can be included in the overall project budget, but the acquisition must be funded by a source other than NY Forward.
- **Training costs.** NY Forward funds cannot be used to cover continuous costs, such as training costs.
- **Expenses related to existing programs.** NY Forward funds cannot be used to supplement existing programs or replace existing resources.

Project Requirements

In order to be considered for funding through the NY Forward program, projects must meet the requirements stated below:



- **Location.** Projects must be located in the NY Forward area, as shown on the map above. *Projects located outside the NY Forward area can be proposed but applicants must include a justification. The LPC will decide on a project-by-project basis if projects outside the boundary will be considered for funding.*



- **Timing.** Projects must be able to break ground within two years or sooner of receiving NY Forward funding.
- **Impact.** Projects must have a transformative impact on downtown.
- **Sponsor.** Project sponsors must have the capacity and legal authority to undertake the proposed projects. Sponsors must be legal entities (LLCs), not individuals. Sponsors can be public, not-for-profit, or private entities.
- **Decarbonization.** New construction, building addition, and renovation projects greater than 5,000 square feet must meet building decarbonization requirements for energy efficiency. There are several options for compliance including: (1) meeting the New York State Stretch Energy Code, (2) obtaining an Energy Star score of 90 or better using EPA's Target Finder Calculator, or (3) obtaining a certification from a third-party, such as Energy Star or LEED. The Project Team will assist project sponsors in meeting decarbonization requirements, as applicable.
- **Funding and Required Match.** Projects must have financing commitments largely secured or be able to demonstrate a clear path to securing financing. Private project sponsors should target a match of at least 35%. Non-profit project sponsors should target a match of at least 5%. **Applications with higher match percentages than the minimum will be more competitive during the evaluation process.** Projects submitted by public entities are not required to provide a match, but some level of match is preferred and will strengthen the application.

Evaluation Criteria

Projects will be evaluated by the Local Planning Committee and New York State based on the criteria below:

- **Eligibility.** Projects must be one of the eligible project types outlined on Page 3 and must meet all the project requirements outlined on Page 4.
- **Readiness.** Projects should be well-developed and ready to proceed immediately or soon after the award of NY Forward funding.
- **Alignment with Victor's Vision.** Projects must advance Victor's vision for downtown, as explained below:

"The Village of Victor is a welcoming, walkable area celebrating its small-town historical charm as it grows into a more vibrant connected community. Our vision incorporates our downtown's unique role as the heart of daily life for both Town and Village residents, continually aspiring to build connections that reinvigorate gathering spaces, recreational activities, and promotes small business. We actively support the enhancement of our centralized downtown park, local Main Street services, and library campus, motivated to leverage even greater future connection-driven networks. The Village's unique collaborations across public and private partnerships augment long-term economic aspirations towards strategic housing development, commercial offerings, as well as community recreation, and gathering. There is robust momentum for our future downtown area that reflects a stronger sense of place, enhanced quality of life and greater connection-based access opportunities for coming together to live, work, play and belong."



- **Alignment with New York State’s Goals.** Projects must support at least one or more of New York State’s goals for the NY Forward program. These goals are to:
 - Create an active downtown with a strong sense of place.
 - Attract new businesses that create a robust mix of shopping, entertainment, and service options for residents and visitors, and that provide job opportunities for a variety of skills and salaries.
 - Enhance public spaces for arts and cultural events that serve existing members of the community but also draw in visitors from around the region.
 - Build a diverse population, with residents and workers supported by complementary diverse housing and employment opportunities.
 - Grow the local property tax base.
 - Provide amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality of life.
 - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support investments that are more resilient to future climate change impacts.
- **Catalytic Effect.** Projects must have a significant positive impact on the revitalization of downtown Victor and must be likely to catalyze additional investment downtown.
- **Co-Benefits.** Projects must result in benefits to the community, beyond just the project sponsor, such as economic activity or improved quality of life.
- **Cost-Effectiveness.** Projects must have a realistic budget and must represent an effective use of public resources.

Application Form Instructions (Pages 1-5)

Kimberly walked through each page of the application form, as described below.

- **Instructions & Deadlines (Pages 1-2):** Step-by-step directions, along with the timeline and milestones for the application process.
- **Project Eligibility & Evaluation Criteria (Pages 3-5):** Information on which projects are eligible and how projects will be evaluated.

Large Project Application (Pages 6-15)

Applicants submitting projects of \$75,000 or greater in total cost must complete the Large Project Application. A brief overview of each page of the form can be found below:

- **Project Sponsor Information (Page 6):** Contact information for the project sponsor. The project “sponsor” is the person proposing the project, who has the legal authority to implement it.
- **Basic Project Information (Page 7):** Project location and existing conditions.
- **Project Description (Page 8):** Project description, project area size, and project activities.
- **More Project Information (Page 9):** Alignment with the goals of the program and an explanation of property ownership.
- **Project Readiness (Page 10):** Work completed to date, required permits, challenges (if any), and historic building status.



- **Timeline & Sponsor Capacity (Page 11):** Implementation timeline, the sponsor's previous experience, and plans for future maintenance.
- **Total Cost & Budget Estimate (Pages 12-13):** Total project cost, total NY Forward request, the budget table, and sources for cost estimates. *See the match targets and budget notes below.*
- **Attachments (Page 14):** Photos of existing conditions are required. Optional attachments include renderings of the proposed project, cost estimate quotes, letters of financial commitment, a business plan or pro forma, a property survey, and MOUs.
- **Certifications (Page 15):** Applicants must sign to certify their application.

Match Targets and Budget Notes

- Private sponsors: 35% match
- Public entities: 0% match
- Non-profits: 0% match

Kimberly emphasized three important points about the budget:

- It is strongly recommended that project sponsors get contractor or third-party cost estimates/quotes to develop their budget estimates.
- Project sponsors may need to finance the total project cost using a bridge loan, owner equity, or other financing mechanism, because NY Forward funds are structured as reimbursable grants and are not released until the full scope of the project is completed.
- Private project sponsors should target a minimum match of 35% of the total project cost. Applications that meet or exceed the 35% target will be more competitive during the evaluation process; however, all applications will be considered.

Decarbonization

Decarbonization requirements for energy efficiency apply to:

- New construction projects greater than 5,000 square feet
- Building additions greater than 5,000 square feet
- Substantial renovation projects where the renovated area is greater than 5,000 square feet and two substantial renovation criteria are met

Projects that must comply with decarbonization requirements can choose **one** of the following options:

- Achieve 110% of the applicable minimum energy credit requirements
- Obtain an Energy Star score of 90 or better using EPA's Target Finder Calculator
- Obtain a third-party certification from an approved organization, such as Energy Star or LEED

If a project is required to meet the decarbonization requirements, a member of the Project Team will work with the applicant to identify how to achieve compliance. Two Decarbonization 101 webinars will be offered, presenting the same content: **August 11 at 11:00 AM** and **September 10 at 1:00 PM**.

Registration is available at VictorNYForward.com.



Historic Preservation Webinar

A Historic Preservation webinar will be held on **August 20 at 1:00 PM**. Registration is available at VictorNYForward.com.

Small Project Letter of Interest Form (Pages 16-18)

The Small Project Letter of Interest Form is for projects less than \$75,000 in total cost. Two points are important to note:

- The Small Project Letter of Interest form is to demonstrate interest in the establishment of a Small Project Grant Fund in the future. There is no guarantee that a Small Project Grant Fund will be established.
- If a Small Project Grant Fund is established, applicants will need to complete another round of applications to be considered for the Small Project Grant Fund in the future. Submitting a Small Project Letter of Interest does not guarantee funding from the Small Project Grant Fund.

Small Project Eligible Activities

- **Interior and exterior renovations** for commercial and mixed-use buildings, such as façade renovations, permanent signage and awnings, commercial interior fit-out, or HVAC, mechanical, and plumbing improvements
- **Residential improvements** to the upper stories of mixed-use buildings
- **Business assistance**, such as the acquisition of permanent commercial machinery
- **Soft costs**, such as architecture, engineering, and environmental review services
- **Public art**

Small Project Ineligible Activities

- Property acquisition
- Deferred maintenance or general repairs
- Working capital
- Landscaping
- Improvements to municipally-owned or operated buildings
- Labor performed by the applicant, their family, or their staff

Letter of Interest Form

- **Background Information (Page 16):** Eligible and ineligible activities, as described above.
- **Basic Project Information (Page 17):** Project sponsor information, project location, project description, and total project cost.
- **Budget Estimate (Page 18):** The budget table. The maximum grant request is 75% of total eligible project costs, and small projects must provide a 25% match.



How to Submit

Completed applications and any attachments can be submitted in any of the following ways:

- **Drop off at:** Village Offices (60 E. Main Street)
- **Mail to:** Village Offices (60 E. Main Street)
- **Email to:** VictorNYForward@gmail.com

All Project Applications and Small Project Letters of Interest are due by **Monday, August 31, 2026 at 4:00 PM**.

How to Get Help

Applicants who have questions or need assistance completing their Project Application Form or Small Project Letter of Interest can send an email to: VictorNYForward@gmail.com.

Next Steps

- **August 25, 6:00 PM:** Local Planning Committee Meeting
- **August 31, 4:00 PM:** Project applications close
- **September 24, 6:00 PM:** Local Planning Committee Meeting
- **October 15, 6:00 PM:** Public Workshop 2 & Project Spending Activity

Questions & Answers

Time was reserved at the end of the informational session for questions.

- Are LPC meetings posted online?
 - **Answer:** Yes, the presentation slides and meeting summary will be posted online at VictorNYForward.com for each LPC meeting.
- Are there preset percentages for how to divvy up the money between public and private projects?
 - **Answer:** No, there are no predetermined percentages for how the \$4.5 million gets awarded. The LPC will recommend the projects it believes are most likely to benefit Victor to New York State, and New York State will make the final decision on which projects get funded based on the established evaluation criteria.
- When reviewing applications, is there any back and forth that occurs?
 - **Answer:** Yes, the LPC has the ability to request changes to scope, match, and request amounts from project applicants on a project-by-project basis. For instance, if the LPC would like a project applicant to increase their match percentage, the Project Team will work with the project applicant to determine if that request is feasible.



- I understand that landscaping is not an eligible activity for Small Projects. Is landscaping an eligible activity for Large Projects?
 - **Answer:** Yes, landscaping and site improvements are eligible activities for Large Projects.
- If my project gets removed from consideration for funding by the LPC, or is not funded by New York State, can I re-apply for the Small Project Grant Fund?
 - **Answer:** Yes, if a Small Project Grant Fund is established and your project is eligible for that fund, you may re-apply for the Small Project Grant Fund even if your project was removed from consideration by the LPC or ultimately did not receive Large Project funding.
- **Randy Shea (Destination Victor, NY):** Questions why the Study Area boundary does not start at the entrance to the Village, because that is where the traffic is. Expresses concern that half of the businesses in the Village have been left out of the Study Area and are not eligible for this program. Sees a lot of opportunity right at the entrance to the Village, such as a message board sign to welcome people into the Village and notify them about events.

