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Peekskill To Begin Transformational Projects With \$10 Million Downtown Revitalization Initiative From New York State

Peekskill, N.Y. – The City of Peekskill was selected as a recipient of a \$10 million Downtown Revitalization Grant from New York State, bringing forth innovative ideas to create jobs, drive economic growth, and transform the downtown and waterfront areas. A press conference was held in The Hudson Room on Tuesday, May 11th with Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul and other distinguished guests to announce which projects the state has approved.

Launched in 2016 by Governor Andrew Cuomo, the Downtown Revitalization Initiative moved to aggressively accelerate and expand the revitalization of downtowns and neighborhoods to serve as centers of activity and catalysts for investment in all ten regions of the state. Selected as the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Round 4 winner for the Mid-Hudson region in August 2019, Peekskill has made it a mission to build upon its growth and establish itself as the ultimate small city destination.

"New York State is making a big bet on the great City of Peekskill, because they know we have the people, the vision, and the community engagement necessary, to keep the City moving ever upward," said City of Peekskill Mayor Andre Rainey. "Make no mistake: the State isn't providing ten million dollars in funding by accident. They see strong, visionary leadership that is balancing growth and affordability,

while remaining true to the creativity and diversity that brought us to this point. I couldn't be more proud of the people of this City and all we have accomplished together."

The specific projects to be funded through the Peekskill DRI will include:

- Redevelop 41 N Division Street as a Mixed-Use Building Housing the Peekskill Arts Center, Multi-media Production Spaces, and Apartments
- Transform the Kiley Youth Center as a New Location of the Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester
- Revitalize the Paramount Theater
- Downtown Revitalization Fund to Help Small Businesses Make Capital Improvements
- Transform Downtown Peekskill with Public Art
- Implement Public Wi-Fi in Lepore and Pugsley Parks and Low-Cost Internet Service for Bohlmann Towers and Barham Senior Houses
- Create a Downtown Civic Hub and Improve the Downtown Public Realm
- Improve Connections for Pedestrians and Cyclists between the Waterfront and Downtown
- Create a Marketing and Branding Strategy with Wayfinding Signage
- Enhance Pugsley Park as a Downtown Attraction
- Enhance Monument Park, a Gateway into Downtown Peekskill
- Reconstruct Fleischmann Pier and Improve Charles Point Park as a Premier Waterfront Destination

In preparation for the next steps, the City of Peekskill will be hiring a full-time assistant planner who will have a key role in managing and overseeing the DRI grant projects. With the projects to be funded now selected, New York State will begin to assign projects to various agencies, which will then create funding contracts for each project. For any city projects, the City will develop and distribute RFP's to produce design and construction documents, and award those city contracts. Depending on the project, the design process will include public hearings to obtain feedback on design elements for parks and public space improvements. Upon completion of the design and construction documents, the City will then bid the construction projects out, choose contractors to do the construction work, and administer project budgets through completion. Project planning is aimed to start in the latter part of 2021 into early 2022, with contracting for the work to take place in 2022.

"Congratulations to Peekskill on the announcement last Tuesday on the final awards for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) projects," said Marsha Gordon, President & CEO, The Business Council of Westchester. "As co-chair of the Local Planning Committee, along with Mayor Andre Rainey, it was an

honor to work with the great Peekskill community to choose the projects which will add to the vibrancy and growth of the City.”

“The DRI funding is a big boost in the arm for our historic downtown and for our entire community,” said Deb Milone, Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce President. “These funds will enhance the look and feel of our community – a redesign of Gazebo Plaza making it the civic heart of Peekskill, improved streetscapes to enhance pedestrian safety, wayfinding signage and public art, money to revitalize our beloved Paramount Theater, money to assist our small business community as they recover from the pandemic, and so much more. The Chamber is grateful for the State for banking on Peekskill’s future and thanks all who participated in the entire DRI project.”

“The Peekskill Business Improvement District (BID) played a large part in the DRI process and we were thrilled to see so many exciting projects put forth for consideration,” said Brian Fassett, Peekskill Business Improvement District President. “The approved projects will help link the downtown with the waterfront, boost the visibility of our artist community, provide much-needed help for small businesses, and create a marketing campaign to encourage visitors to discover everything Peekskill has to offer. In addition, three strategic projects--the redesign of the gazebo plaza, the former Workers Comp building, and the Paramount Theater upgrades--will help transform downtown for residents and visitors alike. Let's get started!”

The announcement of projects selected by the State for the City of Peekskill has created a buzz of excitement for the community as well as our City officials:

“Peekskill is on the cusp of a renaissance,” said City of Peekskill Councilwoman Patricia Riley. “All the exciting news a few years back about being awarded the 10 million dollar grant is now coming to fruition. The projects have been announced and now the work begins. This is an exciting time for Peekskill. These projects will benefit our wonderful city and its residents for years to come.”

“The funded DRI projects will have an enormous impact on our downtown, small businesses and the Paramount Hudson Valley theater, a major economic driver for our community,” said City of Peekskill Councilwoman Kathie Talbot. “More exciting still, we can finally connect the riverfront to our downtown, provide bike lanes, and complete Fleischmann’s Pier for future economic tourism.”

For more information about the DRI grant and the next steps, please contact City Hall and speak to our Planning and Development Department at (914) 737-3400.

About the City of Peekskill: The City of Peekskill is a thriving, historic community located on the banks of the Hudson River. Just under one hour north of New York City, Peekskill is culturally and economically vibrant with abundant natural resources due to its location on the river and at the gateway to the Hudson Highlands. With over three miles of continuous parkland, the waterfront is a regional destination with a variety of active and passive recreation, as well as breathtaking views of the Hudson River. The downtown area features an array of dining establishments, a growing arts community, and a hub for new generation technology and multimedia. For more information, please visit www.cityofpeekskill.com.

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