

VILLAGE OF

BALLSTON SPA

Downtown Central Business District
Saratoga County

NY Forward Application

Capital Region | Regional Economic Development Council



Contact:

Mayor Frank Rossi

mayor@villageofballstonspa.org

Introduction

The Village of Ballston Spa Board of Trustees and its NY Forward Local Planning Committee are pleased to present their application for the NY Forward grant. When the NY Forward program was first announced, the Board reviewed its goals and criteria and immediately thought Ballston Spa was a perfect candidate.

Ballston Spa, incorporated in 1807, boasts of a rich history. It was among the first resort towns in America, drawing residents and visitors to its therapeutic mineral springs from 1770s to 1820s. Soon after, mills and manufacturing came. Their remnants still can be seen today in historic buildings such as the “Chocolate Factory.” Later, the Village became a bedroom community, and although a great place to raise children, its downtown experienced a decline in the 1980s and 1990s, with vacant storefronts spreading throughout the Village.

However, Ballston Spa saw new life as its first wave of renewal in the early 2000s saw many new businesses open, including a coffee shop, the renovation of a historic hotel, service businesses, retailers, and restaurants. Even after the trials upstate communities faced after the COVID-19 pandemic, Ballston Spa continues to see its property owners and new entrepreneurs harness their creativity and investments and entrust them to Ballston Spa’s downtown.

That hard work pays off. Ballston Spa is an attractive place where people flock to live, work, and play. It draws new residents and visitors year-round. Village residents are engaged and thoughtful neighbors truly live out the motto that we are a “Village of Friends.”

Now, the community is facing some vacant and underutilized properties and the potential of Saratoga County moving a number of its offices and, with it, the large daytime customer base that supported downtown businesses. Ballston Spa has been the county seat since 1817.

The Village government has taken several steps to plan and prepare for investment opportunities like NY Forward. First in 2020 it adopted an **Economic Development Plan**. Then in 2022, it approved a **Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan**, and the Public Library completed its **Library Master Plan**. The Village has also formed the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to analyze and work toward **modernizing the Comprehensive Plan**.

Ballston Spa takes great care to invest in its community. It is primed to make the best use of NY Forward grants to spur more private and public investment to revitalize the downtown for everyone.

Local Planning Committee

- Donna Dardaris
- Kelly Delaney-Elliot
- Carol Johnson
- Tina Mangino
- Andy Manion
- Bernadette VanDeinse-Perez, Committee Liaison
- Karen Martell
- Natalia Martinez
- Rory O’Connor
- Ray Otten
- Dana Womer

Village Board of Trustees

- Frank Rossi, Mayor
- Ben Baskin, Trustee
- Elizabeth Kormos, Trustee
- Shawn Raymond, Trustee
- Bernadette VanDeinse-Perez, Trustee

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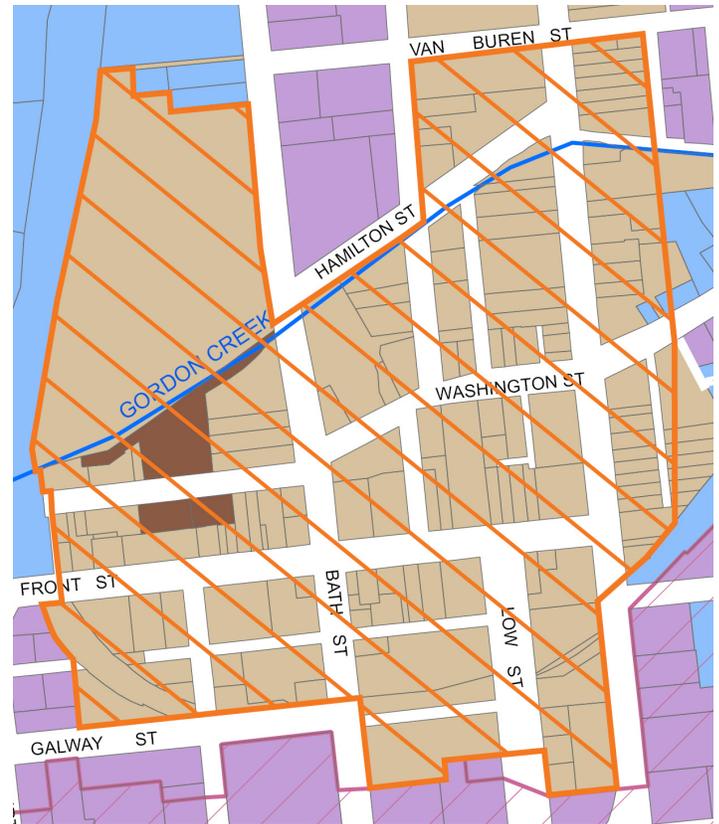
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Proposed NY Forward Zone Geographic Area

Physical Description

Ballston Spa's proposed NY Forward zone is highly compact and situated over the heart of the Village's pleasantly-walkable downtown. The area is zoned as the Central Business District (CBD), which allows for commercial and residential uses, making it ideal for mixed-use buildings. Its perimeter is 1.21 miles long and is 36.5 acres in area.

It features popular walkable shopping thoroughfares including Milton Avenue/Route 50 and Front Street. It incorporates streets with growing economic and residential potential, including Bath Street, Washington Street, an arts-centered and craft beer-focused district, Low Street, and others. A pedestrian ambling along these noted streets would enjoy a one-mile walk among shops, restaurants, and public spaces.



The proposed NY Forward zone is centered on the heart of Ballston Spa's Central Business District. A map of the zone in context of the entire Village can be found on page 17.

Justification

Ballston Spa's proposed NY Forward zone is located in the CBD, which is among the most flexible zoning within the Village, allowing for mixed-use development. This zoning has created the eclectic two- to three-story buildings that populate downtown today. This flexibility offers opportunities for diverse projects, which residents have noted is a desirable trait of the Village. Being centrally located, it serves and benefits the greatest number of residents and visitors. The zone includes public services such as the Village Office, police department, one of two fire companies, and the Public Library. In addition, it is home to the beautiful and historic Wiswall Park and features pedestrian-scale lighting, trees, and more along its walkways.

While the proposed zone has much to offer, it also has significant room for improvement. Many buildings need façade improvements, ADA and accessibility updates, and structural repairs. More pedestrian amenities are required as well as better streetscaping. Notably, within the proposed zone are three vacant properties ready for repurposing or redevelopment—92-96 Front Street, a vacant bar; 24 Washington Street, a former bowling alley; and 125 Bath Street the former Angelica's medical linens launderer. As mentioned earlier in the Introduction, Saratoga County is considering moving its offices out of the Village. However, this zone presents so much opportunity with the right mix of public-private sector investment.

Vision Statement

Ballston Spa will leverage its welcoming and charming atmosphere; its history and future potential; its uniquely walkable and safe downtown; its diverse and independent businesses; its public spaces, arts, and family events to foster a thriving small business-driven economy and provide a rich quality of life to people of all backgrounds, economic means, and abilities.

The vision statement above was crafted using feedback from the public questionnaire distributed for NY Forward public engagement. Additionally, it is supported by outlined Economic Development Plan goals, especially number two, which emphasizes quality of place through the continued enhancement of the Village’s character and functionality to support a quality of life for residents and businesses.



Wiswall Park is a central venue for many events, movies, and the Farmers' Market.

Ballston Spa | Characteristics of a NY Forward Community

Small Town Charm	For decades, Ballston Spa has been inviting others to “Discover the Charm” in marketing efforts. Since the 1770s, it has offered something historic, unique, and inviting to residents and visitors.
Small + Walkable	In total, Ballston Spa is only 1.6 square miles. The bulk of the business district can be walked in about 1 mile.
Use of Vehicles	Vehicles are a part of living here, but many features encourage walking and biking.
Limited Public Transportation	The CDTA bus services Route 50. The proposed NY Forward zone has stops located at two intersections. As the county seat, some people rely on public transportation in order to access their county services.
Lower Density	The majority of downtown buildings are 2 to 3 stories. The surrounding residential neighborhoods are primarily single-family homes.

**Responding to page 10 Community Characteristics in the Application and Submission Requirements Guide*

Past Investment + Future Potential

Past Investment

Ballston Spa has seen firsthand how the ebb and flow of investment can make transformative changes bringing new residents, businesses, jobs, and even a new outlook to a community.

Between the 1980s and 1990s, Ballston Spa experienced a retraction of its downtown economy. Streets were relatively empty and weren't as lively as they are today. By the early 2000s to 2010s, property owners began investing in the downtown again. During that time, the Lincoln Building on Milton Avenue transformed and opened its doors to a coffee shop, photography studio, comic book shop, and hair stylists. Owners revived dilapidated Victorian homes on Washington Street into a spa and an artists' collective. Front Street began seeing its share of renovations and welcomed diverse businesses from a farm-to-table restaurant, gourmet waffles, a yoga studio, to eclectic retail. While some of these businesses have moved on, the renovations still invite new entrepreneurs to the downtown area.

Non-profits have also transformed spaces to benefit the community. Extensive work occurred to build an art gallery on the top floor of the National Bottle Museum on Milton Avenue. The Museum continues to invest in building improvements, spending more than \$17,000 over the past three years. Nearby, historic Malta Avenue Elementary School was completely renovated into a modern school housed in its beautiful original exterior. Lifeworks Community Action repurposed unused bank offices to house their operations to serve low-income and food-insecure families throughout Saratoga County.

In recent years, the owners of the old Tuflite Building on Low Street put extensive investment, \$48,000, and personal energy into renovating the iconic 1911 red industrial building. It is a large, unique antique shop that provides retail space to other small businesses. A local artist transformed an empty framing shop on Milton Avenue into a business that uses a portion of proceeds to feed children through the regional food bank. At the same time, another pair of artists transformed a cinder block garage on Washington Street with \$125,000 of investment into a jewelry and glass art studio and retail space. A brewer turned the home of Abner Doubleday into a tap room that partners with other food vendors. The Village has also welcomed several minority-owned businesses including professional services, retail, and restaurants such as Nani's Kitchen, a new Indian restaurant.



The Lincoln Building



The historic Medbery Hotel



The Tuflite building now is a large retail space on Low Street



this garage space is now an artists studio and retail space.

Case Study in the Present

For several decades a weatherworn, crumbling warehouse sat on Washington Street. Finally, a local family and three other investors purchased the building and began transforming it throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The owners emptied, gutted, rebuilt, and renovated the building. The owners have **invested roughly \$400,000 into the purchase and renovation** of the building. Since building renovations, another **\$200,000 was invested in equipment and fit-up for a micro-brewery and wood-fired pizza business.**

This investment has yielded a beautiful business, a new place for residents and visitors to dine at and enjoy, and **several jobs—a full-time brewer, four pizza makers, and six front-of-house employees.** This project has increased the property's value and will result in higher property-tax revenues. The business will also generate additional sales activity from patrons shopping in the downtown business district.

This business will be celebrating its grand opening on September 24, 2022.





Past Investment + Future Potential

Future Potential

The Local Planning Committee identified several pending projects with private property owners within the proposed NY Forward zone.

The Old Bowling Alley, 24 Washington Street

Owner to develop 12,000 square feet into retail flex spaces and exterior beautification. Estimated cost \$1-\$1.2 million in renovations.

Angelica's Property, 125 Bath Street

Interested parties are looking to redevelop the old tannery property into mixed-use. It could be an estimated \$10 million project.

92-96 Front Street, former Monaco's VI Bar

A new owner intends to renovate the property to have mixed-use retail and residential spaces. Investment is approximately \$800,000. There is potential to add a story for residential use.

Washington Street

There is a plan for a three- to four-story mixed-use building. Retail at the ground level and apartments on the upper floors (approximately 13,000-17,000 square feet). The owner is pursuing a lot-line adjustment. This would be an estimated \$3.6 million investment.

3 Science Street

Expansion of footprint of a single-level commercial business and add three levels of residential living space or offices above. Lot-line adjustment is being pursued and is in the initial stages of the planning process.

Front Street to repair deteriorating masonry railroad structure

Owner is pursuing a lot-line adjustment and is in the planning and design stage. The plan is for ground-level retail and residential or office spaces on upper floors. This project would extend Front Street retail and connect downtown to the Tedisco Trail and Iron Spring Park

Galway Street

Owner is pursuing a lot-line adjustment and is in the planning and design stage. This project would add retail, office, and residential space. Additionally, it expands the walkable retail area.

51 Front Street

Plans are to add one to two stories above an existing one-story commercial building. It is in the planning and design stage.

Science Street vacant lot

Plan for a three- to four-story building of mixed use—retail on ground level and apartments on upper floors.

Ballston Spa Elks Lodge, 10 Hamilton Street

Recently, Elks Lodge 2619 had plans drafted for a complete remodel and second-floor addition for offices. The project is expected to cost \$486,000.

Recent + Impending Job Growth

Fast Growing County Offers Opportunities

Saratoga County is one of the fastest-growing counties in upstate New York. Between 2010 and 2020, there was a 7.2 percent increase in the population, an increase of 15,902 residents.¹ Ballston Spa is next to two of the fastest growing towns in the Capital Region – the Towns of Ballston (#4) and Malta (#8).² New companies and housing to accommodate workers were built in those towns. The surrounding growth is an opportunity for the Village of Ballston Spa. With a concerted effort between the public and private sectors and targeted investment, Ballston Spa can capitalize on the new residents and customers added to the area.

Expansion of GlobalFoundries in Malta, NY

The enactment of the CHIPS and Sciences Act of 2022 will allow GlobalFoundries and Qualcomm to enter into an agreement that will bring \$4.2 billion in investment to expand operations at the fabrication site in Malta.³ The expansion is expected to create 1,000 high-tech jobs and thousands more in other support staffing.⁴ Ballston Spa should position itself to draw these new residents to the Village rather than intensely developed and less affordable Saratoga Springs.

Development of Larger Vacant Properties

Angelica's Property, 125 Bath Street

Redevelopment interest in the Angelica's property, a 6-plus acre parcel with an 80,000 square foot structure on Bath Street, is highly promising. The property was once a medical-linens launderer and offered employment to many area residents. After its closing in 2010, it has been vacant and went through remedial measures through the Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) grant in 2019 to clean up soil and groundwater contamination from a tannery that previously existed at the site. Residents are eager to see the property reimagined to include mixed-use development with apartments on the upper floors and business space on the bottom. In addition, residents have expressed interest in co-working spaces, co-creation space, gyms and workout facilities, and other upscale businesses. This would add significant new employment to the Village and housing to a growing workforce in surrounding areas.

The Old Bowling Alley, 24 Washington Street

Across from Angelica's, a former bowling alley sits empty on the corner of Washington Street and Bath Street. The redevelopment of this parcel would work synergistically with the growing redevelopment over the past five years that is connecting the walkable businesses district of Milton Avenue/Route 50 down along Washington Avenue to Bath Street. This area's growing vibrancy will be amplified by fully utilizing this parcel for commercial use.



More views of the Angelica's Building

Other Considerations Impacting Jobs

Accessibility for Employees

Ballston Spa is a gateway between Saratoga and other southerly Capital Region cities. Some employees rely on the bus to commute to work; however, the bus stops throughout the Village have no amenities like benches or shelters. Additionally, many buildings in the Village are not ADA accessible due to their year of build and age. Grants would help fund small businesses and property owners to improve their buildings to be more accessible to those in wheelchairs, those who need assistance with walking, and parents with strollers. Making these enhancements will also open employment opportunities to more diverse people.

Expanding Fiber Optic Internet, Free Downtown Wifi

More jobs are of a work-from-home or hybrid nature. Ballston Spa currently only has one internet technology available—cable internet. Bringing fiber optic internet to the Village will allow those working from home to consider relocation to Ballston Spa or support in-home businesses with faster internet. Additionally, free Wifi could be a strong draw for customers, increasing sales activity downtown and leading to job growth.

¹ [Fastest-growing counties in New York, Times Union, May 18, 2022](#)

² [Capital Region is home to many of the fastest-growing places in upstate New York, Albany Business Review, August 20, 2022](#)

³ [White House Fact Sheet, August 9, 2022](#)

⁴ [GlobalFoundries Statement on U.S. House of Representatives' Passage of Legislation to Increase U.S. Semiconductor Manufacturing, July 28, 2022](#)

Key Statistics

Population: 5,095

2,488 Housing Units

50% Owner Occupied

44% Rental

6% Vacant

Median Average Household Income: \$61,378

The majority of the population hold jobs in the service industry:

County Government

Medical

Education

Working-from-Home on the Rise

The nature of employment has changed since the pandemic. Many businesses have moved their jobs to a hybrid model, allowing employees to **work-from-home** full or part-time.

Source: Ballston Spa 2020 Economic Development Plan

Quality of Life

Ballston Spa residents enjoy an excellent quality of life, however, the Village must work proactively to ensure that all parts of its population are served well. NY Forward, private and other public funding sources will enhance quality of life.

Increase Affordable Housing

Ballston Spa may be more affordable than nearby communities like Saratoga Springs; however, costs are rising. Increasing affordable housing options, like apartments, is a priority. This proposal recommends recapturing the usage of upper levels of buildings within the proposed NY Forward zone and encouraging multi-use development in the Central Business District. Affordable housing will serve those with lower incomes and retirees on fixed incomes who struggle to remain in Ballston Spa due to the cost of upkeep on older single-family homes.

Prioritize Accessibility

Ballston Spa will use NY Forward funds to create a grant and loan fund to assist small businesses and property owners within the proposed zone in making improvements to their buildings to make them accessible to

wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers. Also, the proposal adds elevators to the Village Office Building to make it easier for people to access their public services.

Provide Improved Amenities to Pedestrians

The Village will use some grant funds to provide benches, shade trees, and make streetscape improvements in the proposed NY Forward zone. In addition, a public restroom is proposed to make those visiting downtown more comfortable and spend more time in Ballston Spa.

Improve Community Connectivity

The plan recommends funding to be set aside for improvements to Wiswall Park and public art as part of a placemaking strategy. A strength of the Village is its sense of community enjoyed by many.

Deliver High-Speed Internet

This proposal includes introducing fiber optic internet to the proposed NY Forward zone with a plan to provide free Wifi to the NY Forward zone. It would be a valuable public amenity to residents and those visiting downtown but also helpful to those with a digital device who cannot afford cellular or internet service.



The annual "The Way We Were" Car Show is one of the largest car shows in the region. It is named after the Robert Redford film which was, in part, filmed on Front Steet in Ballston Spa.



Supportive Local Policies

Within the last several years, Ballston Spa has positioned itself to be ready for investment opportunities like NY Forward and to work in better partnership with businesses, property owners, and residents.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>2020 Adoption of Economic Development Plan that outlines the economic goals designated by the public and maps out a several years strategy.</p> | <p>2022 Official appointment of a Village Liaison to the Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association (BSBPA).</p> |
| <p>2021 Appointment of Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee that is charged with researching and then rewriting the Comprehensive Plan.</p> | <p>2022 Approval of an additional \$5,000 for marketing funds to the BSBPA to manage Village digital marketing.</p> |
| <p>2022 Approval of the Urban Forestry Inventory and Management Plan.</p> | <p>2022 Adoption of law allowing outdoor dining and retail displays.</p> |
| <p>2022 Start of the Brownfields Opportunity Area (BOA) grant work at site on the north end of the Village.</p> | <p>2022 Drafted legislation for "Overlay District" zoning to provide flexibility to large vacant properties to encourage redevelopment.</p> |
| <p>2022 Adoption of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan that prioritizes pedestrian/cycling infrastructure and improvement projects.</p> | <p>2022 Approval of a contract with a cellular service provider to mount equipment to Village property to improve cell coverage in Ballston Spa.</p> |

Public Support

The Local Planning Committee immediately set out to seek public engagement. On September 2, the Village created a survey online and a dedicated webpage on the Village website was created to provide information to the public. These items were shared online and on social media. A press release was also sent that day to inform the public about the Village's intent to apply and the need for public input. The Schenectady Gazette and WTEN ABC 10 reported on the story.

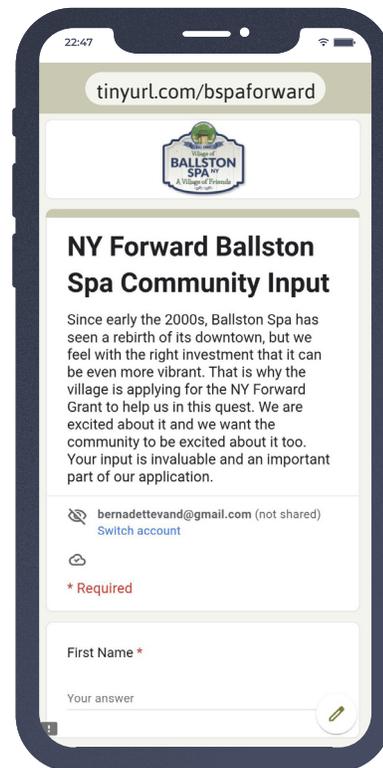
In-person engagement was sought by the Local Planning Committee at the Ballston Spa Annual Ice Cream Social, where the program was explained and paper copies of the survey were distributed and collected. Surveys were delivered to the Public Library and signs with a QR code to the survey were posted in downtown businesses. Online and paper responses to the survey totaled 123. A summary of the results is included on page 16 in this document.

Committee members also made personal appeals for input in neighborhoods and local business establishments. Later, a publicly-noticed official Village of Board of Trustees meeting on September 12 included a one-hour informational session and public discussion where the public was updated about the NY Forward grant and asked to provide their input. Also considered were comments related to the Central Business District and downtown shared in a recent Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Public Workshop on August 30.

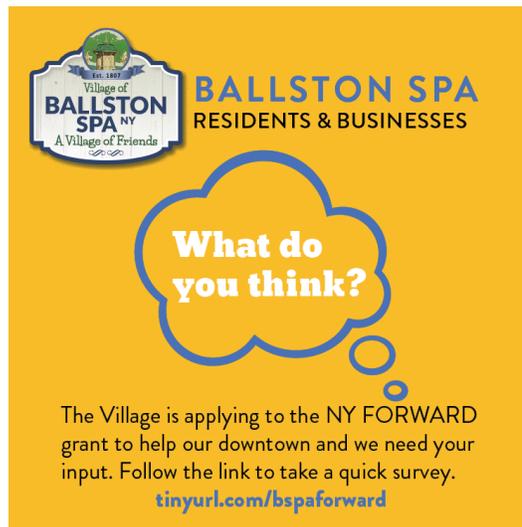
The proposed NY Forward zone was increased to include additional areas in the Central Business District and the transformative projects were adjusted as a result of listening to public input.

A final public-input session was held on September 21 at a workshop to finalize and approve the Village's application to NY Forward. This application was approved unanimously by the Board of Trustees.

The survey was made digital and easy to access through QR code.



A graphic was used on social media to promote the survey.



Website

www.villageofballstonspa.org/ny-forward-revitalization-grant

Earned Media

www.dailygazette.com/2022/09/05/ballston-spa-seeks-community-input-for-ny-forward-revitalization-grant

www.news10.com/news/saratoga-county/ballston-spa-seeking-input-for-downtown-revamp



The Village Office Building

Transformative Project Opportunities

\$700,000 Village Office Building Repairs and Renovation of Upper Floors for Office and Business Space

Investments will go toward repairs and renovations to this 1873 building, its façade, and upper levels as outlined by the Village engineer. The high ceilings and large windows on the upper floors would make them attractive to rent as office or business space and would provide a source of income to the Village. The Village will seek equipment grants to pay for elevators for accessibility purposes. Project Sponsor: Village of Ballston Spa



The Village Office Building

\$350,000 Public Library Phase 1a and 1b of Master Plan: Reading Room, Stair and Elevator Additions

Funding is to go toward Phase 1a and 1b of the Library Master Plan: a reading room addition, and a stair and elevator addition. The budget for these projects is assumed to be 25 percent from the Village and 75 percent from grants and donations. Project Sponsor: Ballston Spa Public Library



An example from the Library Master Plan

An example from the Library Master Plan





A view of Front Street looking down Low Street

\$500,000 Micro Grants/Revolving Loan for Building and Accessibility Improvements

The Village would establish a program to distribute funds to renovate façades, improve accessibility for those with disabilities or strollers, and renovate retail space and upper-floor vacancies. The Village will seek the assistance of a local banking institution to set up and administer the grant. Project Sponsor: Village of Ballston Spa

\$150,000 Wiswall Park Renovation

The Village will seek professional services to develop a master plan to renovate this 112-year-old park in the center of the Central Business District and proposed NY Forward zone. Renovations would keep the park accessible and full of lively activity as it is a central component of placemaking in that area of Ballston Spa. Renovations would also better highlight the historical "Sans Souci" mineral spring with a new fountain and would add seating with small pavillion. The Village is partnered with organizations like the BSBPA to organize the Farmers' Market and Friends of Wiswall to weed and address invasive plants in the park. Project Sponsors: Village of Ballston Spa



Wiswall park is home to the Farmers' Market, Movies in the Park, and often features public art





A small public bathroom would be built in the Village of Ballston Spa to make residents and visitors more comfortable downtown.



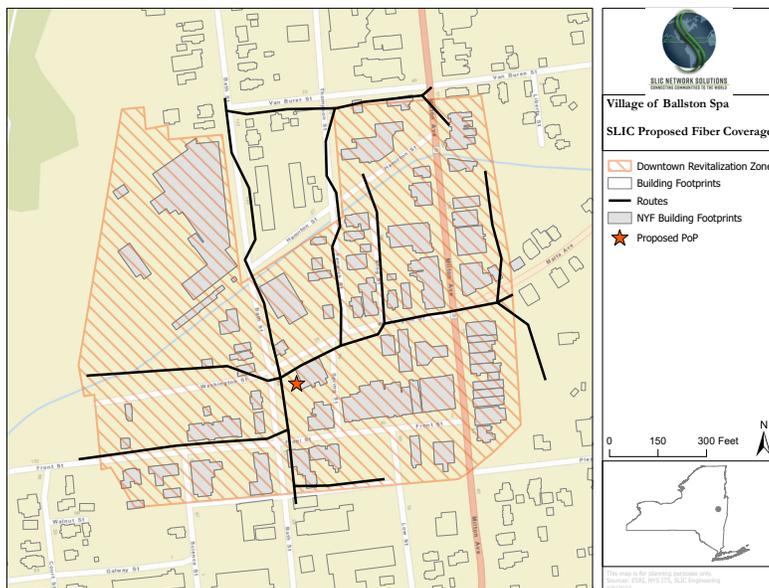
An interactive information center kiosk will provide information to residents and visitors about downtown shops and events.

\$150,000 Small Public Restroom and Interactive Visitor Information Center

Funds will build a badly needed restroom with an interactive visitor information center screen within the NY Forward zone. Access to a public bathroom and visitor’s information will help Ballston Spa’s merchants, restaurants, museums, and other businesses. Potential partners to populate the interactive information center could include the BSBPA, Public Library, local museums, and volunteer organizations. Project Sponsor: Village of Ballston Spa

\$50,000 Downtown Fiber-Optic Internet and Free Wifi Network

Ballston Spa would become highly competitive to businesses and work-from-home workers who rely on the highest-speed internet available. Additionally, installing fiber-optic technology would draw people to the Village. Once installed, the Village would pursue a fully meshed free community Wifi system to cover the proposed NY Forward zone as an added amenity to the Central Business District. Project Sponsor: Village of Ballston Spa



Slic Network Solutions, Inc. provided a map of proposed fiber-optic internet coverage in the Central Business District.



\$65,000 **Art Projects as Part of Placemaking Strategy**

Ballston Spa would invest in the arts and community engagement projects. In the past, the Village has successfully hosted art walks, a birdhouse community art program, and more. The Village has an established Art Committee and can partner with many non-profits and volunteer organizations. Project sponsor: Village of Ballston Spa

\$235,000 **Streetscape Improvements**

Funding will implement improvements to walkways, streetscapes, brick walks, tree replacement, and benches. Bringing pedestrian-scale amenities and beautification to the retail district is essential in making it inviting to residents and shoppers. Project Sponsor: Village of Ballston Spa

\$50,000 **Create a Marketing and Branding Strategy with Wayfinding Signage**

Collaborate with local partners to develop and implement new overall community branding with coordinated wayfinding signage. This is part of Goal 3 of the Economic Development Plan. An existing committee can be called into action to begin this work. The Economic Development plan identified the BSBPA as a partner. Project Sponsor: Village of Ballston Spa



If awarded an additional \$2.25 million:

\$2.25 mil **New Retail/Commercial Building with attached Public Parking Garage**

Use a public-private partnership to build a mixed-use building with an attached public parking garage at the back at the existing lot at Malta Avenue. Parking is a prominent concern of residents and the business community needs more retail space. The garage would feature handicap parking at the ground level, dedicated electric vehicle charging spots, and public parking. Project sponsor: Village of Ballston Spa and future private participant

Administrative Capability

Ballston Spa has a great partner in Saratoga County. Should the Village be awarded the NY Forward grant, the Saratoga County Planning and Economic Development Department has pledged administrative assistance.

The Village of Ballston Spa was also awarded a Brown-field Opportunity Area (BOA) grant, which requires a committee's involvement. The intention is to involve the NY Forward Local Planning Committee, to the degree members are interested, in helping to administer, plan, and implement the BOA grant since there are synergistic opportunities between the two grants in the downtown Central Business District.

Village staff has handled numerous grants in the past, including a major records management grant within the past year. The Treasurer, Village Clerk, Village Administrator, and others participated in the administrative aspects of assisting with the record management grant's intent, ensuring fulfillment of its requirements, and submitting the necessary paperwork throughout the process.

For grants like NY Forward and the BOA grant, the Village will seek additional third-party administrative resources to provide direction, planning, and implementation. For instance, the Village already engaged with Labella Engineering for issues related to engineering, architecture, and planning for municipal streets and buildings. Labella Engineering reassessed the Village Office Building related to the NY Forward grant to provide estimated costs for some of the internal and external renovations. In addition, the Village is working with the New York Department of State to allow us to engage with a planning consultant on the BOA grant and would consider the same for NY Forward, keeping a synergistic approach in mind.

Our Village has seasoned veterans at the helm of our Planning and Zoning Boards, who the Village Board of Trustees routinely seek advice and ask for their assistance with Village building and infrastructure issues. Additionally, the Village Attorney, Karla Buettner, and Planning and Zoning Board Attorney, Stefanie Bitter, both of Bartlett, Pontiff, Stewart & Rhodes, P.C., are recognized for their knowledge in municipal law, planning, building, and grant implementation. The Village is engaged with outside accountant P. Robert Fox (EFPR Solutions) and nationally-recognized Teal, Becker & Chiamonte (TBC) as the Village Auditor. TBC will be providing a single audit for the Village's USDA loan and grant and are prepared to do any necessary auditing related to this grant.

The Village Department of Public Works staff maintains and provides other work related to municipal buildings and assists in guiding any bidding process and review of work performed by outside parties. The average experience level for our DPW staff management with the Village is over ten years per leadership member. In addition, the Village maintains a positive working relationship with the Town of Milton's staff, as the downtown Central Business District is located in the Town of Milton. As seen by the Letter of Support from Milton Supervisor Scott Ostrander, the Town of Milton is fully committed to helping the Village navigate this process to the degree the County cannot assist. This tri-tiered backing is unique to the Village of Ballston Spa and means it is fully prepared to be successful in this grant's planning, implementation, and processing.



Survey Summary

A four-question survey was conducted online and in-person in September 2022.

123 Respondents

104 online. 19 paper.

Age

Age Range: 20–80 years old

No response provided for 33 respondents

Average Age: 50 years old

Median Age: 52 years old

Gender

Female: 71 (58%)

Male: 39 (32%)

No response provided for 13 respondents

In your opinion, what is our downtown's best asset?

- Thriving, diverse, independent businesses: 59 responses
- Walkability/Proximity of businesses and residential: 32 responses
- Charming/Historical character: 22 responses
- Community Events/Arts/BSBPA: 10 responses
- Relaxing/Friendly Atmosphere: 5 responses - Safe, peaceful neighborhoods; Welcoming feeling, friendly people, peaceful.
- Additional responses: Wiswall Park (4); Front Street (3); Henry Street; Location on Rt. 50; The business community which works and supports each other (3); Old Iron Spring Park; Brookside Museum; County Seat.

In your opinion, what is our downtown's greatest challenge?

- Inadequate Parking: 39 responses
- Building Maintenance/Vacancy: 30 responses
- Attracting Amenities/Businesses Downtown: 17 responses
- Walkability/Accessibility: 16 responses
- Traffic: 11 responses
- Poor condition of infrastructure and public spaces: 5 responses

What else does this area need to make it a better place to work, live and play?

- More Pedestrian Friendly: 32 responses
- Improve Parking: 30 responses
- Update/Clean Up Buildings: 20 responses
- More Parks/Greenspace/Playground: 14 responses
- Create More Amenities/Things to Do: 12 responses
- Improve Library: 9 responses
- Improve Bike Access: 9 responses
- Better Publicity/Signage: 7 responses
- Promote Good Development: 6 responses

Are there any specific projects you think would improve this zone of our downtown?

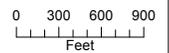
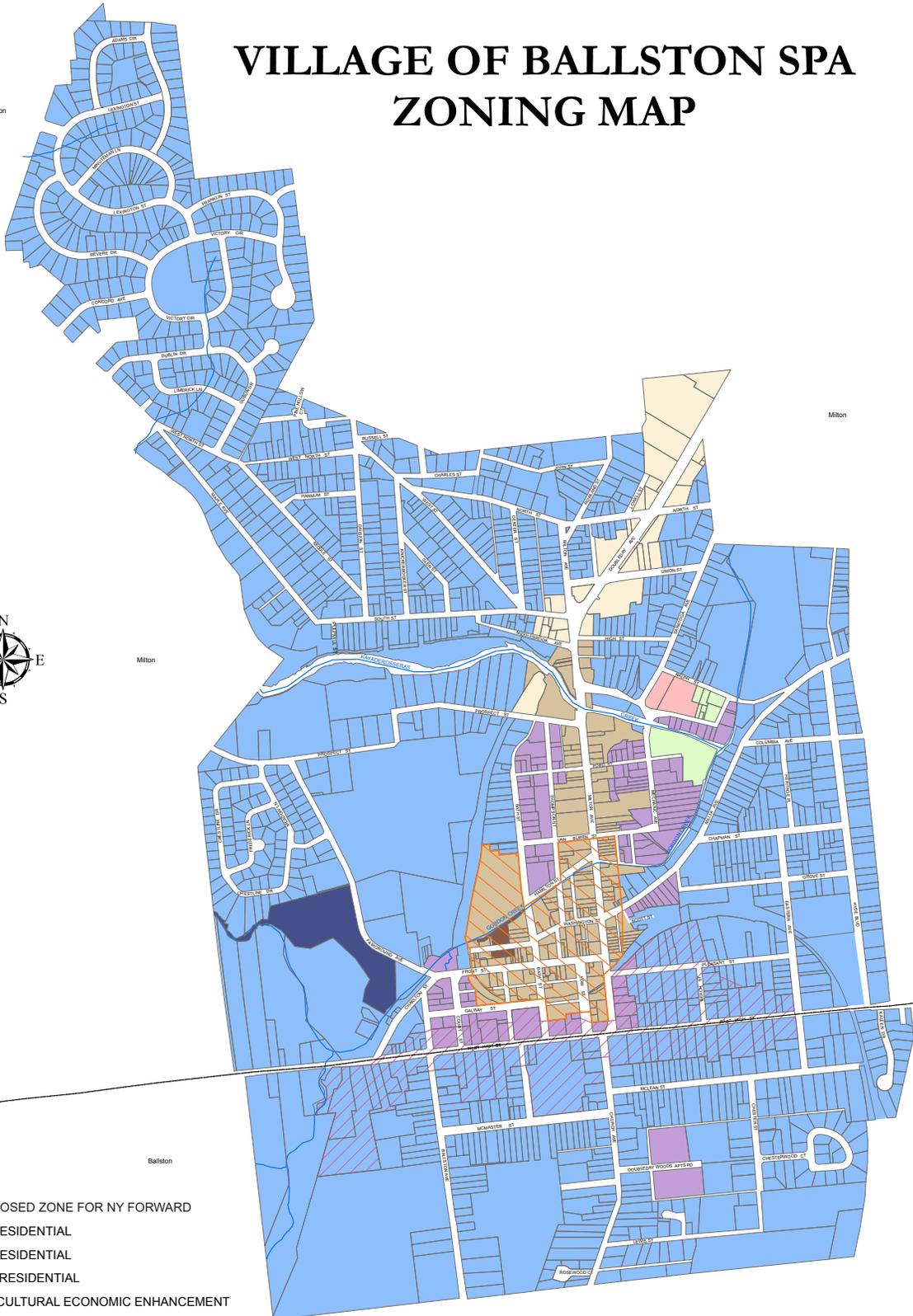
- Redevelopment of Existing Buildings: 24 responses
- Beautification– Upkeep of buildings and streets: 18 responses
- Improve Wiswall Park: 16 responses
- Better Recreation Options: 15 responses
- Pedestrian Safety: 12 responses
- Extend downtown: 6 responses
- Infrastructure: 4 responses

VILLAGE OF BALLSTON SPA ZONING MAP



Legend

-  PROPOSED ZONE FOR NY FORWARD
-  R-1: RESIDENTIAL
-  R-2: RESIDENTIAL
-  R-2S: RESIDENTIAL
-  CEE: CULTURAL ECONOMIC ENHANCEMENT
-  C: COMMERCIAL
-  CBD: CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
-  M: INDUSTRIAL
-  AD: ADULT BUSINESS DISTRICT
-  HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT



1 inch = 300 feet

DATE: 09/12/2017

Letters of Support

- Congresswoman Elise Stefanik
- Senator Jim Tedisco
- Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh
- Theodore T. Kusnierz, Jr., Chairman, Saratoga County Board of Supervisors
- Eric Connolly, Town of Ballston Supervisor
- Scott Ostrander, Town of Milton Supervisor
- Todd Shimkus, President, Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce
- The Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association

ELISE M. STEFANIK
21ST DISTRICT, NEW YORK

2211 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4611
stefanik.house.gov

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3221

**HOUSE ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE**
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CYBER, INNOVATIVE
TECHNOLOGIES, AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND LABOR**
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER
EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE INVESTMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WORKFORCE PROTECTIONS
**HOUSE PERMANENT SELECT
COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE**

September 20, 2022

NY Forward Selection Team
Capital Region – Regional Economic Development Council
Hedley Park Place
433 River Street
Troy, New York 12180.

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my strongest support for the Village of Ballston Spa’s recent application to the NY Forward grant program.

The Village of Ballston Spa is an optimal candidate for the growth and economic development that the NY Forward program seeks to inspire. In the heart of Saratoga County, a gateway between the Capital Region and the North Country, Ballston Spa is uniquely positioned to offer residents and visitors alike a special, community-oriented experience.

Funding through NY Forward would allow Ballston Spa to build upon existing infrastructure, natural public spaces, and its local business portfolio, and to do so in cooperation with Village residents. An important component of their approach is small business involvement, including a loan program that would allow owners to make repairs and ADA-compliant renovations. Street signage will be updated, and free public WiFi will be made available for easier visitation and integration in the NY Forward vicinity. Wiswall Park will also be rejuvenated, with plans to use the space as a “village green” for future street markets, fairs, and public art exhibitions. NY Forward can help build on the success and intrigue of Ballston Spa to continue to attract business investments, quality jobs, and tourism.

I fully support the Village of Ballston Spa’s NY Forward grant application and strongly recommend funding for this initiative. I ask that you give this application your most serious consideration. If you have any questions or concerns to not hesitate to contact Joshua Williams in my Glens Falls district office at 518-743-0964.

Sincerely,



ELISE M. STEFANIK
Member of Congress

GLENS FALLS
5 WARREN STREET
SUITE 4
GLENS FALLS, NY 12801
(518) 743-0964

PLATTSBURGH
137 MARGARET STREET
SUITE 100
PLATTSBURGH, NY 12901
(518) 561-2324

WATERTOWN
88 PUBLIC SQUARE
SUITE A
WATERTOWN, NY 13601
(315) 782-3150

Ranking Minority Member:

Education

Mental Health

Committees:

Banks

Commerce, Economic Development
and Small Business

Consumer Protection

Finance

New York City Education

**THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK**



**JAMES N. TEDISCO
Senator, 49th District**

Albany Office:

515 Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12247
(518) 455-2181
Fax (518) 426-6821

District Office:

636 Plank Road, #205
Clifton Park, New York 12065
(518) 885-1829
Fax (518) 371-2649

Satellite Office:

Fulton County Office Building
223 West Main Street, Rm. B2
Johnstown, New York 12095
(518) 762-3733
Fax (518) 762-3721

E-Mail: tedisco@nysenate.gov

Website: www.tedisco.nysenate.gov

September 23, 2022

NY Forward Selection Team
Capital Region - Regional Economic Development Council
Hedley Park Place
433 River Street
Troy, NY 12180

To Whom it May Concern:

I am pleased to write in support of the Village to Ballston Spa in its efforts to apply for the NY Forward grant. I have the distinct honor to represent Ballston Spa, a community with a great comeback story of renewal.

The Village of Ballston Spa was once a relatively quiet village with many empty storefronts along the downtown streets. More recently, however, the community has done much to turn that around and it's ready for the next chapter of its comeback. Through NY Forward grant funding, this chapter can significantly play a vital role in it's revival story.

Ballston Spa's Local Planning Committee recommends accessibility for all people of all abilities and means throughout its downtown. With additional funding from the NY Forward grant, the Village can tackle renovations, restoring storefronts and upper floors and reopening them for usage. The Committee creatively recommends to bring pedestrian amenities, high-speed internet downtown for public use, and the incorporation of beautiful Wiswall Park and the arts for placemaking.

Ballston Spa is an excellent candidate for the NY Forward grant. I strongly recommend the Village of Ballston Spa for grant funding through NY Forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Jim Tedisco'.

James N. Tedisco
Senator, 49th District



MARY BETH WALSH
Assemblywoman 112th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER
PRO TEMPORE
COMMITTEES
Education
Judiciary
Libraries and Education Technology
Mental Health

September 19, 2022

NY Forward Selection Team
Capital Region - Regional Economic Development Council
Hedley Park Place
433 River Street
Troy, NY 12180

To whom it may concern:

I am pleased to give my support to the Village of Ballston Spa as it applies to the NY Forward grant. Ballston Spa holds a special place in my heart, and I made it the home of my district office. It is also where I have had my law office for many of my 30+ years practicing.

It is a unique place boasting with eclectic historical architecture, independent shops, and a welcoming community. Over the years, many small business owners, residents, and non-profits worked especially hard to transform what was once a quiet and empty downtown into a bustling community. As a result, the Village now offers the quaint-community life residents and visitors desire.

Ballston Spa's Central Business District is ready for yet another transformation, and the NY Forward grant would be essential in its efforts. Between public and private investments, these funds will help reclaim underutilized spaces for new businesses and housing, provide accessibility to those with differing abilities and mobility, reimagine its parks and public spaces, restore its historic Village Office building, and expand its library.

I encourage those selecting the recipients of the NY Forward grant to choose Ballston Spa. It is an ideal community for the grant program.

Thank you for your time and consideration to this request. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at walshm@nyassembly.gov or 518-884-8010.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mary Beth Walsh'.

Mary Beth Walsh
Assemblywoman
112th District



County of Saratoga
Board of Supervisors

Theodore T. Kusnierz, Jr.
Chairman of the Board

Jonathan G. Schopf
Vice Chairman of the Board

Therese M. Connolly
Clerk of the Board

Bridget M. Rider
Deputy Clerk of the Board

September 20, 2022

NY Forward Selection Team
Capital Region - Regional Economic Development Council
Hedley Park Place
433 River Street
Troy, NY 12180

To whom it may concern:

As Chairman of the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to express my strong support for the Village of Ballston Spa's application for the NY Forward grant. Ballston Spa, as the county seat, has been an excellent host over the years to County Government. The same sense of hospitality it shares with the County is what they deliver to its residents and visitors throughout the year.

It is clear that Saratoga County and the Village of Ballston Spa have experienced incredible growth over time. The County has outgrown several office buildings, and we are completing a facilities assessment to help in planning our future needs for our residents. We will continue to work with Mayor Rossi to maintain a strong relationship between the County and the Village.

NY Forward aims to harness potential growth and development, and I believe that Ballston Spa is an excellent candidate for such a grant. Due to its highly visible and easily accessible location, the Village is very attractive to future mixed-use development. Ballston Spa's potential investments in this property and others, paired with NY Forward grant funding, would work synergistically toward revitalizing the Village's downtown.

In closing, Ballston Spa is one of the most unique communities in our County, and I wholeheartedly support the Village's application. There is no doubt in my mind that Ballston Spa will help pave the way to show just how effective NY Forward grants can be for many years down the road.

Sincerely,

Theodore T. Kusnierz, Jr.
Saratoga County Board of Supervisors Chairman; Town of Moreau Supervisor



TOWN OF BALLSTON

323 Charlton Road, Ballston Spa, NY 12020

518-490-2780

September 15, 2022

NY Forward Selection Team
Capital Region - Regional Economic Development Council
Hedley Park Place
433 River Street
Troy, NY 12180

To whom it may concern:

I am happy to provide my support to the Village of Ballston Spa in their effort to apply to the NY Forward program. The Village's southern third is in the Town of Ballston and is a unique place to work, live and play.

Ballston Spa has a strong history of economic revival due in large part to its small business community and the passionate residents who care about it. An investment from NY Forward will help the village launch several projects and programs that will generate positive economic activity and create a space that is attractive to residents and visitors.

Ballston Spa's application places priority on creating opportunities for private and public investment partnerships with small business owners and property owners. The goal is to improve and rehabilitate existing buildings and reestablish multi-use buildings in locations that are currently underused or unused. The planning committee has prioritized accessibility for those with disabilities, the addition of fiber optics high-speed internet, streetscape improvements, and restoring its historic Wiswall Park.

With the funds, the Village also intends to restore its historic Village Office building. It is central to the services provided to the community and sits in the heart of the Central Business District. It also places a special priority on providing funds to the Public Library to help it jump-start its plans for building improvement outlined in its recently developed Master Plan.

I will conclude that Ballston Spa is a prime candidate and closely aligns with the goals outlined by NY Forward. I encourage the selection award Ballston Spa with a NY Forward grant.

Sincerely,

Eric Connolly
Town of Ballston Supervisor



Office of the Supervisor
Scott Ostrander
503 Geyser Road Ballston Spa, N.Y. 12020

September 15, 2022

NY Forward Selection Team
Capital Region - Regional Economic Development Council
Hedley Park Place
433 River Street
Troy, NY 12180

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to give my emphatic support to the Village of Ballston Spa's application for the NY Forward grant. About two-thirds of the Village is within the Town of Milton, and I am proud that Ballston Spa is part of our community and a great partner in serving the residents of our area.

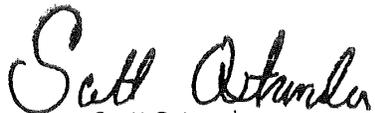
Ballston Spa is an ideal community where NY Forward investment can spur a new revival of thoughtful growth in jobs and affordable housing. It is a unique community with a rich variety of independent small businesses in retail, services and restaurants. Their proposal offers funding grant and loan fund program to small property owners and businesses for renovations, repairs, and ADA improvement to existing spaces. It also supports efforts to rebuild where structures are no-longer safe or useful to make those spaces vibrant again. Ballston Spa wants its downtown to be attractive, relevant, and useful to meet today's demands.

Ballston Spa proposes adding amenities to its downtown. It includes a plan to add fiber optic high speed internet with public WiFi in the proposed NY Forward zone. Priority is placed on improving its streetscapes and way-finding signage in the Central Business District. The Village also intends to renovate Wiswall Park, which acts as the "village green." It is home to the local farmer's market, small business-hosted events, and is a space for community art, music and family-friendly movies. Investing in these areas will further attract residents and visitors to support small businesses and job growth.

Further, Ballston Spa plans to bolster its own services to the residents. It proposes renovating the façade of the Village Office building to make it an attractive gateway to the business district on the western end of Front Street and repairing its structure, so the top floor is usable for commercial workspace. Additionally, the proposal focuses on strengthening its library by giving it seed funding to begin implementing its new Library Master Plan improvements making it more accessible to serve all residents.

Together, I see these strategic investments as essential to push the Village into its next phase of healthy and prosperous growth. I urge the selection team to pick Ballston Spa as a NY Forward recipient.

Sincerely,


Scott Ostrander
Town of Milton Supervisor



28 Clinton Street • Saratoga Springs, New York 12866
(518) 584-3255 • (518) 587-0318 fax
tshimkus@saratoga.org • www.saratoga.org

Todd L. Shimkus, CCE, *President*

September 22, 2022

NY Forward Selection Team
Capital Region - Regional Economic Development Council
Hedley Park Place
433 River Street
Troy, NY 12180

To whom it may concern:

The Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce and the Village of Ballston Spa have long been partners in supporting its downtown business community. The Chamber is pleased to support the Village's efforts to compete for the NY Forward grant. It is a prime candidate for this kind of funding, and it will result in the type of revitalization the state is looking to accomplish.

Ballston Spa is unique in its number of independent small businesses in its downtown. Still, the Village's proposed NY Forward zone includes additional opportunities to expand retail and residential spaces with the proper funding.

Ballston Spa has a growing appeal to visitors throughout the Capital Region and those who come for the Saratoga Race Course Track Season – its plan capitalizes on this increasing tourism. The plan's focus on bringing pedestrian amenities, a bathroom, and a digital visitor center to downtown visitors and residents will yield more economic activity for shops and higher sales tax for the Village.

The Village's mix of public and private efforts shows a genuine commitment from the community. When Ballston Spa does something, they do it together, and I know the state will see measurable positive results from its investment. Therefore, I highly encourage the selection team to pick Ballston Spa to receive a NY Forward grant – it's a sure bet.

With Kindness,



Todd Shimkus, CCE
President
Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce



September 19, 2022

NY Forward Selection Team
Capital Region - Regional Economic Development Council
Hedley Park Place
433 River Street
Troy, NY 12180

To whom it may concern:

The Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association is proud to support the Village of Ballston Spa in its pursuit of the NY Forward grant. Our organization has been partners with the Village for nearly 40 years. Concurrently, the BSBPA and the Village have been advocating for and supporting the small business community through efforts to make Ballston Spa more inviting and business-friendly.

Over our 39 years as an organization, we have seen the Village through its ups and downs. We have seen how cooperative efforts between property owners, small business owners, residents and the Village can make a positive impact. We know our community's past success will translate to new wins, especially with the help of the NY Forward grant.

Uniquely, about three-quarters of our businesses membership are women entrepreneurs and over the past few years we have seen minority-owned businesses on the rise. Ballston Spa is special in this way; it a welcoming and supportive community that wants to see its local businesses succeed.

A number of proposals in Ballston Spa's application will work toward drawing more people to shop downtown, provide amenities to visitors and residents, and better connect and expand walkable retail zones within the Central Business District. We look forward to working with the Village in their efforts.

We emphatically support the Village of Ballston Spa's application and encourage the selection committee to award it the grant.

Sincerely,

The Board of Directors

Christin E. Kernoch
Vice President

Jane M. Jase
Treasurer

D. M.
Secretary