# DRI FEEDBACK:

## VILLAGE OF OSSINING
## SEPTEMBER 8, 2021

- WHAT IS THE DRI?
- SURVEY: MULTIPLE CHOICE
- SURVEY: SHORT ANSWER
- FARMER'S MARKET POP-UP
- NEXT STEPS

# What is the DRI?

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is a comprehensive approach to boosting local economies by transforming communities into vibrant neighborhoods where the next generation of New Yorkers will want to live, work and raise a family.

Each of the State's (10) Regional Development Councils (REDCs) will solicit applications and choose downtowns with potential to attract redevelopment, business, job creation, greater economic and housing diversity, and opportunity.

## SURVEY: MULTIPLE CHOICE

290 TOTAL RESPONDENTS,

11 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

## WHO RESPONDED?

## WHAT ARE THEIR PRIORITIES?

## Who Responded?

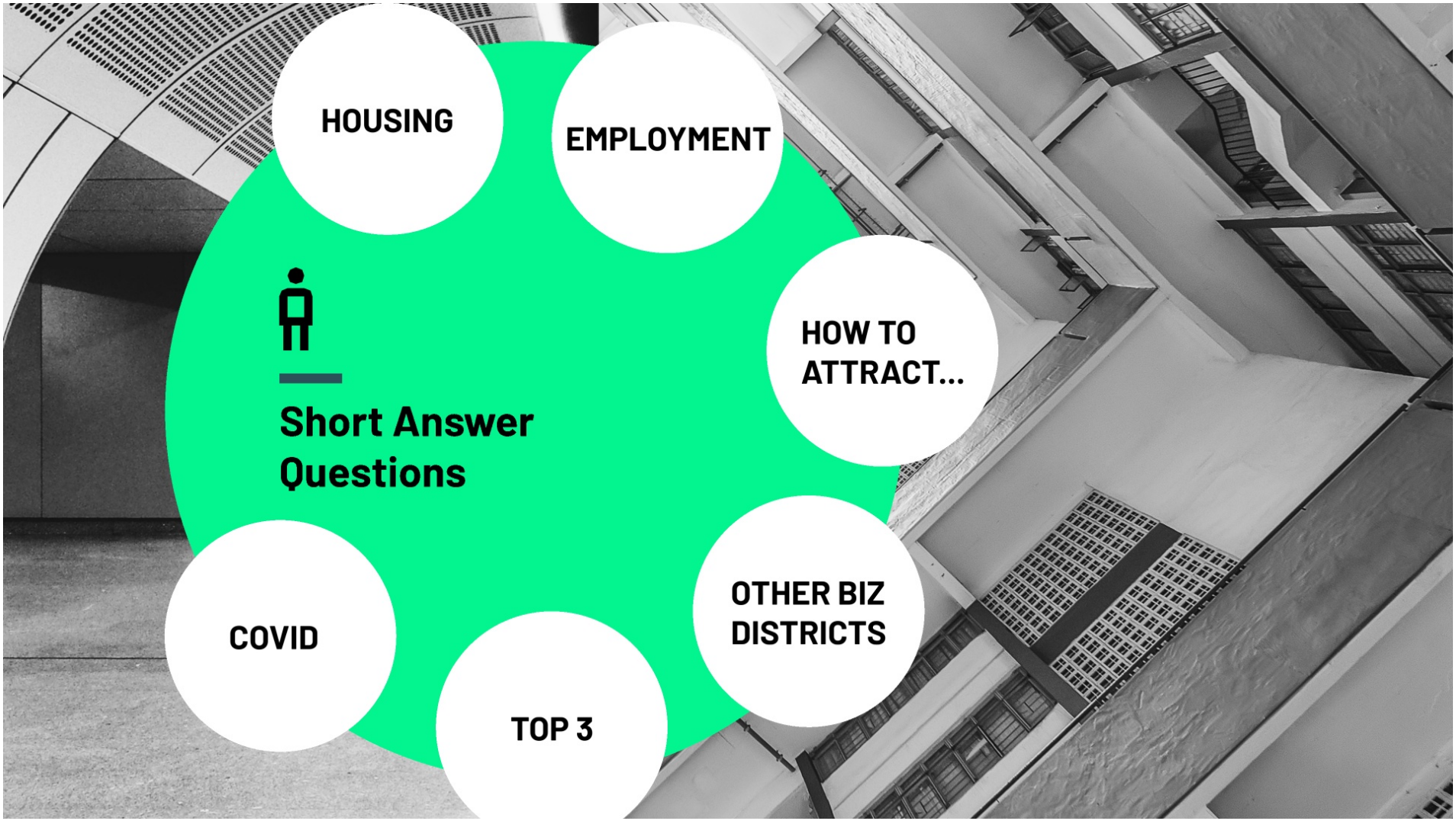
- 69.8% are Village residents
- 31.6% are Town residents
- 7.6% work in the Village
- 2.4% are former Village residents
- 1.4% are local, non-resident stakeholders
- 1% are not connected to the Village, but interested in Ossining's future

*respondents could select multiple options

# Priorities:

## "I care about this and want it in Ossining."

- **72.1%**: Greater recreational access to the Hudson River
- **65.5%**: More outdoor recreational amenities (improved parks, nature trails etc.)
- **60%**: Improved walkability and bike-ability
- **57.9%**: Enhanced public space for arts and cultural events
- **57.8%**: Preservation and Adaptive Reuse of Structures
- **45.5%**: Employment opportunities
- **39.9%**: Alternative transportation modalities (electric trolleys, e-bikes, etc.
- **36%**: Expanded indoor recreational amenities and program offerings
- **36%**: Increased parking in business districts
- **32.3%**: Diverse Housing Opportunities


HOUSING
EMPLOYMENT
HOW TO ATTRACT...
Short Answer Questions
OTHER BIZ DISTRICTS
COVID
TOP 3

**"What types of housing opportunities would you like to see, or see more of, in Ossining?"**

**Common themes:**

- Redevelop single family homes into safe, multi-family homes rather than encouraging construction of hi-rise buildings;
- "Rent-to-own" or affordable homeownership opportunities;
- Preserve housing diversity to preserve community diversity;
- Promote mixed-use and downtown apartments;
- Workforce/ housing affordable to working families & young professionals;
- Senior housing;
- Creative housing types, such as cohousing, multi-generational, artist, ADUs.
- Repeated mention of lower taxes, preservation of historic single-family homes and concern over infrastructure/ schools being able to support more housing.

**"What types of employment opportunities would you like to see, or see more of, in Ossining?"**

**Common themes:**

- Retail/ Small Business
- Restaurants/ Hospitality
- Employment in the arts/ culture
- Better paying
- Cooperative/ co-working spaces for entrepreneurs
- Businesses that will hire locally
- Teen and young adult focus, including apprenticeship or training programs, to encourage retention;
- Larger businesses/ chains to lower residential taxes
- Re-use of waterfront factories to attract tech/ light industrial/STEM
- "Green" jobs (environmental, electric infrastructure)

**"What can we do to make Ossining more attractive to (businesses, residents/ potential residents, visitors/ tourists)?"**

**Common themes:**

- Lower taxes/ business incentives
- Improve parking (residential and downtown)
- Cleaner streets/ streetscaping/ beautification
- Address "zombie" properties/ eliminate blight
- Advertise/ invest in historical tourism/ restoration
- Diversity retail/ restaurant offerings
- Capitalize on waterfront/ improve waterfront access
- Encourage arts/ entertainment venues
- Support public art
- Local economic development agency/ business ambassadors
- More public spaces/ outdoor events/ cultural fairs/ outdoor dining opportunities
- **Invest in downtown/ waterfront/ intra-Village connectivity (e-shuttle, e-bikes, etc.)**

**"The DRI focuses on downtowns. How do we make sure that investment in Ossining's downtown strengthens the Village's other business districts as well, such as the Croton Avenue and North/South Highland business districts?"**

**Common themes:**

- By far, the most common response was to **enhance connectivity**, via improved sidewalks, a shuttle/ trolley service, and public transportation
- "A rising tide lifts all boats"— business districts will see organic growth once the downtown does
- Help districts to complement one another vs. compete
- Advertising campaign/ collaborative marketing (Local Business Bingo, Scavenger Hunt)
- Consistent signage, streetscaping, wayfinding
- Integrate more public art
- Encourage business diversity through zoning changes
- Address "zombie" properties/ eliminate blight
- Improve traffic flow/ access issues
- Increase parking availability

**"What are Ossining's three greatest assets?"**
**"What are the Top 3 things you would like to see in Ossining?"**

**ASSETS-Common themes:**

- Nearly every answer included "diversity"—some specified ethnic or socioeconomic—and "waterfront"
- Ossining Public Library & Ossining Schools (Science Research)
- Various parks and trails (Wishnie, SSKG, Nelson), beautiful green spaces and Hudson River access (outdoor recreation)
- Proximity to other river towns and to NYC/ convenience of the Metro North train station
- Community spirit and commitment to volunteerism
- Reputation of being the most affordable a "river town"
- Village's rich history (evidenced by its architecture, in many cases)/ "small town feel" often described as "quaint"
- "Potential", in many cases specifically referring to the downtown and the possibility of new retail and dining opportunities.

**TOP 3 TO SEE- Common Themes:**

- Connectivity, green spaces, parking, diversity in retail/ restaurant type, more investment in waterfront, beautification/ streetscaping, cleaner streets, additional code enforcement, arts/ cultural destinations, performance venue, improved sidewalks, safe housing, outdoor pool, public events, public art, lower taxes.

**"How has your experience of Ossining changed OR how has the time you spend in Ossining changed as a result of COVID?"**

**Common themes:**

- Many respondents moved to Ossining during COVID (and are loving it)
- Spending more time with neighbors and building community relationships
- Investing in upkeep of home/ yard
- Nearly half of respondents are working from home
- Many more are shopping & eating locally **(mainly outdoors),** though takeout from local restaurants is also popular
- High proportion of respondents would shop/eat in Ossining if there were more options
- Making more use of public parks and green spaces for leisure and exercise

Farmer's Market Pop-Up
August 28th, 2021
9AM- 11AM
Engagement with Staff in English & Spanish
VILLAGE OF OSSINING ROUND 5 DRI APPLICATION PROJECT LIST 2021
THE MARKET SQUARE AT OSSINING

# NEXT STEPS

- Application due by 4PM on September 15, 2021

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