

## SECTION 1.3

# Planning Process Overview

## Introduction

Both the DRI and NYF programs employ an innovative “plan-then-act” strategy that couples strategic planning with immediate implementation. Communities are paired with a consultant team and a project manager from the DOS who will guide them through a targeted, community-based planning process focused on the development of a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP).

The SIP will build upon the community's DRI/NYF application, including the preliminary community vision for revitalization and the proposed project list. The planning process will refine the vision, develop actionable goals and strategies, and identify a suite of complementary and transformative projects to help the community achieve its vision for downtown revitalization.

In each community selected to participate in the DRI or NYF program, a Local Planning Committee (LPC) comprised of local and regional leaders, stakeholders, and community representatives intended to represent diverse interests is convened to oversee the planning process and the development of the SIP. Over the course of the planning process, the LPC — with significant support from the State team and a consultant team — will work closely with the local community to:

- Develop a clear and concise downtown profile and assessment to articulate the story of the region and the downtown and identify key challenges and opportunities.
- Review and refine the vision statement included in the DRI/NYF application.

- Establish goals and strategies to achieve the community's vision.
- Identify, develop, and evaluate projects that could advance the community's vision, goals, and strategies for revitalization.
- Develop detailed project profiles for each project that the LPC recommends for DRI/NYF funding (the LPC will identify a final slate of projects in excess of the available DRI/NYF funding).
- Undertake broad public engagement throughout the entire planning process to solicit input, shape the community's vision for downtown, identify projects, and build support for plan implementation.

A consultant team will compile the SIP, which will be submitted to the State. Following the final submission of the SIP to the State, a multi-agency State team will review each project recommended for DRI/NYF funding. A subset of the projects submitted in the SIP will be awarded funding by the State.

Following the review period, project awards will be announced by the State. Project contracts will be negotiated and executed between project sponsors and relevant State agencies shortly after the award announcements. The contracts will be administered by a variety of agencies and authorities, with the majority held by the DOS, ESD, and HCR. In general, awarded project funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis.

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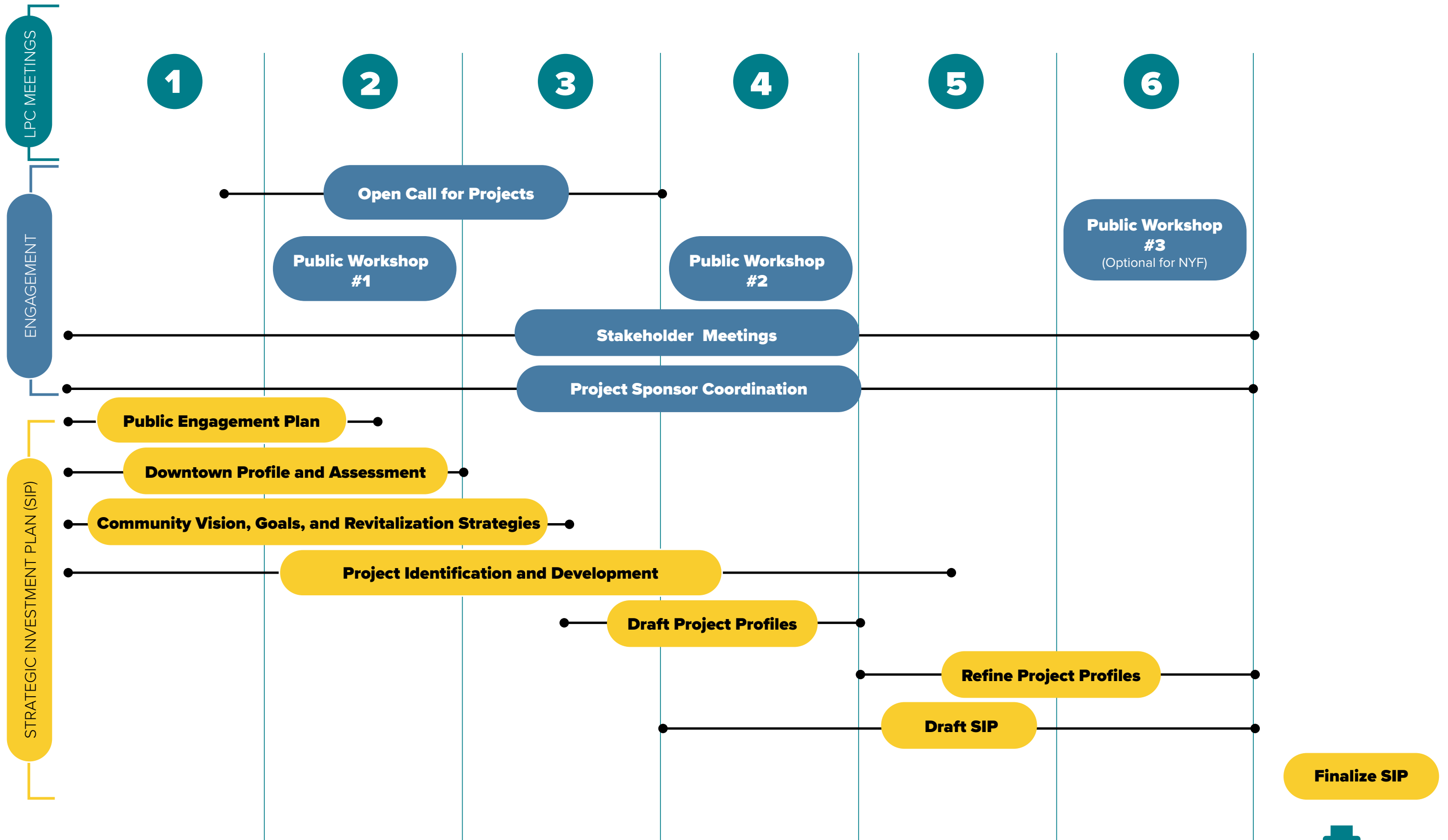
#### Summary of Key Steps in the Planning Process

All deliverables associated with each step will be developed by the consultant team, with guidance from the LPC.



**Typical DRI/NYF Planning Process and Key Deliverable Schedule**

DRI AND NYF GUIDANCE



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*The following sections provide an overview of the key elements of the DRI and NYF planning processes. Detailed descriptions of each element are provided in Sections 2.0 through 5.0.*

#### **Public Engagement**

Transparent, open, and ongoing public engagement is a critical component of the DRI/NYF planning process and the development of the SIP. Public engagement shall occur throughout the entire DRI/NYF planning process to ensure community needs, opportunities, and challenges are identified, to determine potential projects, and to ensure the DRI/NYF revitalization efforts are supported. For additional information and requirements, see [Section 2.0: Public Engagement](#).

#### **Downtown Profile and Assessment**

The downtown profile and assessment shall provide a clear, concise, and compelling narrative that articulates the story of the region and the downtown area and describes the future of the area and region. The profile and assessment should allow the reader to understand why this downtown will benefit from the DRI/NYF program and provide a logical basis for the projects recommended for DRI/NYF funding.

The profile and assessment will give the reader a sense of the downtown – its unique characteristics, strengths, and challenges. It is not intended to provide a comprehensive technical description of the downtown akin to what would be included in a comprehensive plan. While the consultant team will collect, analyze, and evaluate the demographics, market conditions, and other characteristics of the downtown to ensure that the project proposals included in the SIP are realistic and appropriate, the downtown profile and assessment will contain only a summary of this information. Further, the profile and assessment should provide some analysis of the downtown area and highlight any relevant key factors or trends. For additional information and requirements, see [Section 3.0: Downtown Profile and Assessment](#).

#### **Community Vision, Goals, and Revitalization Strategies**

Informed by the community's DRI/NYF application and community input, the LPC will develop a vision statement with corresponding goals and revitalization strategies to guide decision-making about future development and investment in the DRI/NYF area. The vision statement is intended to be ambitious as well as illustrative of the community's vision for the future, which will be advanced through the implementation of DRI/NYF projects. For additional information and requirements, see [Section 4.0: Vision, Goals, and Revitalization Strategies](#).

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#### **Project Development**

DRI/NYF projects can be identified in a variety of ways, including the community's application, during an Open Call for Projects, through public engagement, or during the planning process as it advances. Consultant teams will work closely with project sponsors and the LPC to develop and refine proposed projects.

The LPC will recommend a final slate of projects to the State to be considered for DRI/NYF funding. These projects are expected to have positive and transformative impacts on the DRI/NYF community and will be a mix of public and privately sponsored projects. Detailed descriptions of each proposed project will comprise a majority of the SIP. The LPC will select the final slate of projects based on public input, LPC and community priorities, and evaluation criteria established by the LPC based on State requirements. For additional information and requirements, see [Section 5.0: Project Development](#).

#### **Strategic Investment Plan Compilation**

The goals of the DRI and NYF programs should be reflected in the SIP developed for each community and the projects identified in each plan. The SIPs, which will be prepared by the consultant teams, are a compilation of the required deliverables described throughout this guidebook. Each SIP will describe the unique challenges and opportunities for revitalization of the DRI/NYF area, present the community's vision for the future of the area, and propose transformative projects that may be realized with an investment of DRI/NYF funds.