

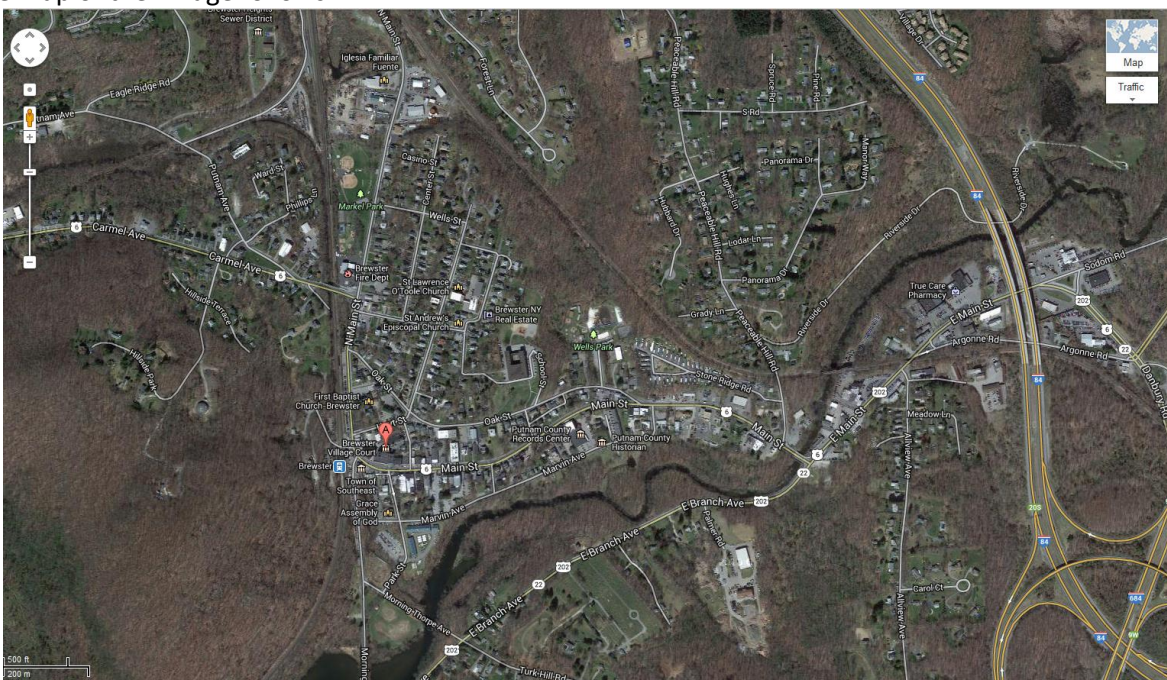
2013 Opportunity Area Application

The Opportunity Agenda is aimed at revitalizing poor communities building on the success and expertise of the Regional Economic Development Councils. The Village of Brewster has a plan to overcome chronic unemployment and underemployment while raising the community through economic revitalization. This plan includes training and skill level improvement, homeownership opportunities and a business friendly attitude all built on an existing expandable infrastructure of water, wastewater, and transportation. Our strengths and commitment will deliver results.

The Village of Brewster's historic urban center, regional transportation hub and scenic vistas with outdoor activities, will promote an enriched quality of life for our residents by creating an attractive community, competitive, pro-business climate cultivating a skilled, diverse workforce; encouraging investment; inspiring entrepreneurship; promoting innovation and discovery; fostering cluster development; leveraging existing infrastructure; advocating environmental stewardship; expanding firms and attracting new enterprises, resulting in extraordinary employment and economic opportunities that reach beyond our Village to benefit the entire region.

Geographic Size and Population. The Village of Brewster encompasses approximately ½ square mile. The Village itself is well over the required 5 square blocks and comprises 2,390 residents as of the 2010 census. The 2,390 residents represent those individuals who are documented residents of the Village of Brewster. The Putnam County Health Department WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Program has reviewed their caseload to estimate the numbers of clients who are undocumented and not captured in the most recent US census. It is important to understand the purpose and eligibility of the WIC Program, as it proves there to be a distressed population in the Village of Brewster. The WIC Program is a supplemental food and nutrition education program that serves pregnant, breastfeeding, postpartum women, infants, and children up to the age of five. To be eligible, the applicant must be a resident of New York State and have a household income of less than 185% of the poverty level. Captured within this count are all members of a family unit. The determination that these individuals were not counted in the US census is from the staff's knowledge and ongoing relationship with these members of the community as well as their WIC affiliation. Children who are receiving NYS Medicaid were included within this count. The count from our WIC families of undocumented individuals is 300, bringing the total population of the Village of Brewster to at least 2,690.

The map of the Village follows:



Our proximity to priority projects:

The Village of Brewster in Putnam County, NY is an historic community about an hour north of New York City, 30 minutes north of White Plains, and 10 minutes from Connecticut and the city of Danbury. We are pursuing strategies and resources that will position us to renew our community by replacing worn-out housing stock, broadening our tax and government services customer base, re-purposing vacant buildings, leveraging new and upgraded infrastructure, capitalizing on the hub of two interstate highways, proximity to NYC via commuter rail, and highlighting natural surroundings such as the East Branch of the Croton River and other environmental assets to promote eco-tourism.

Transportation to and from Brewster to urban business and manufacturing hubs is available by commuter railroad serving Grand Central Station (about 80 minutes) in the south to Wassaic in the north with major commercial stops along the way including; Mt. Kisco and White Plains. Putnam County's Putnam Area Rapid Transit (PART) provides bus service between Main Street and key employment and population centers across Putnam County. Housatonic Area Rapid Transit (HART) provides bus service to Danbury, CT another important employment market. Automobile and other vehicular traffic has accessibility from the intersection of Interstates 84 and 684, while transcontinental U.S. Route 6 runs through the Village as Main Street. We have six commercial airports within reach; Stewart, Westchester County, LaGuardia, JFK, Newark, and Hartford located from 30 to 90 minutes away and private airports in Danbury, CT and Dutchess County. Brewster is convenient to get to making it an ideal location to establish residency, open a business, create a centralized training center, or advanced educational institution.

Priority Projects as designated by the MHREDC within 10 miles of the Village of Brewster:

- SilaRx Pharmaceuticals was awarded nearly \$1 million in Excelsior Tax Credits and is moving forward with its relocation within the Hudson Valley after having secured a location in Putnam County. The Project will retain 40 jobs, while creating another 69.
- Paladin Group is a professional training/education center for first responders. The project involves the purchase & renovation of a 130,000 square foot facility in Putnam County; the intended investment of approximately \$25,000,000; and the potential creation of 180 new jobs. The contract was executed on this project in February 2012. Since that time, the Company has continued to seek private "financing" and the potential partnership with an organization that could assist in moving the project forward. The construction phase of the renovation has begun.

Using education and training to reduce unemployment and alleviate poverty are key objectives to strengthen our community. Education and training empowers the unemployed and under-employed with skills and expertise that meet the requirements of jobs being offered by today's firms. The Village of Brewster is working with the Westchester Putnam Workforce Investment Board which includes Putnam Workforce Partnership to extend their services into our local community. Internship programs exist today and are used by a variety of businesses including the Village of Brewster. Public-Private partnerships are being sought to leverage existing resources to revitalize and lift up the least fortunate among us. Lack of skills is pervasive and destructive to both businesses and the community at-large. It's not enough to provide basic education since it will often lead to poverty level/low income employment. We need to stretch beyond basic skill training to specialized education enabling people to strive for challenging jobs with higher incomes thereby improving security for themselves and their family.

Characteristics of an Opportunity Area

- i. The local poverty rate within the Village of Brewster is 17.9% v. 8.2% for Putnam County (Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates). We meet the requirement and are well above the County rate.
- ii. Unemployment in the Village is estimated at 10.4% at the 2010 census v. 7% in Putnam County. We exceed the required 25% (actual 33%).
- iii. Home ownership in the Village is 22.5%. (2010 census).
- iv. Subsidized School lunches – Information received to date indicates a 17% participation rate. Please note our School District encompasses the Town of Southeast where the median household income is \$92,083 v. \$52,188 for village residents.
- v. The median household income level in the Village is \$52,188 v. \$82,121 for Putnam County. We meet the requirement of less than 80% of Putnam County (63.5%).
- vi. To the best of our ability we believe the Village has a commercial vacancy rate of between 10 and 15%.

The impediments we face are multi-faceted.

- Job creation is hampered by a housing stock that is below standard throughout the business district with over 15% blighted properties along the Main Street corridor. If these properties were improved, new business space and residential dwellings would advance employment prospects. Our expectation is that new mixed use buildings will reduce commercial vacancies, provide employment and promote homeownership. Additionally, construction jobs created with the renewal projects are in and of themselves a partial solution to the current job void.
- Reaching out to the unemployed and underemployed with skills training and business development prospects is another key criteria for success. A local business incubator-education and training facility would strengthen the workforce and advance the community. Whether it is a new location for advanced degree education, a satellite campus of an existing institution, a technical training school, or a vocational training facility, these should all be considered as we plan our future. The existing recently closed Garden Street School Building might serve these purposes well.
- One vacant building - a former movie theater - is currently secured and in a prime location in our Main Street business district. Building demolition is an exploratory option at present that is nourishing developer interest.
- Transportation to worksites within the region is facilitated by pedestrian friendly sidewalks and public transportation. New improved sidewalks are in the planning and design phase along the Route 6 (Main Street) corridor. As an adjunct to the sidewalk project we are including a revamped streetscape (trees, low-energy lamps, and underground conduit) to integrate with the new sidewalks changing the appearance of Main Street in a constructive way. Trains, buses, automobiles, even the Putnam County Bike Trail, offer proximity to several strategic employment markets to provide more access to better jobs.

Our capacity to achieve results is well documented. Since 2002 we have undertaken nearly fifty million dollars in capital projects;

- New one million gallon water storage tank
- New water mains
- Constructed a state-of-the-art sewer processing facility
- New sewer mains
- New connections for every property to the sewer system eliminating septic tanks within the village.
- Repaved all village roads
- main Street façade grants
- Newly renovated Train Station earmarked a Grand Central Station Centennial Architectural Showcase for this year's GCT centennial celebration.
- Niché Marketing Study grant

- Main Street Plan grant (Envision Brewster) – Hudson Valley Greenways
 - Administered funds from; NYC DEP (>\$30,000,000), Army Corps of Engineers (\$525,000), Putnam County (\$2,500,000), for the Sewer & Water projects.
 - Stormwater GIS Mapping funded by two grants from NYS Department of State Water Quality Improvements Program (\$50,000)
 - Veterans Honor Roll Park – Legislative item (\$25,000)
 - Clock/streetscape near station – Legislative item (\$25,000)
 - Vest Program Bureau of Justice Assistance, US Department of Justice DOJ and NYS Soft Body Armor Program NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) (\$15,000)
 - DCJS Legislative item – Law Enforcement Technology & Equipment (\$100,000)
 - NYS Traffic Enforcement Technology TRACS, NYS DCJS (\$12,000)
 - Byrne JAG Recovery Equipment Grant NYS DCJS (Police vehicle) (\$25,000)
 - GOTS (3) – BUNY, STEP, & Child Safety - NYS Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC)
 - Still to be administered; \$975,000 SAFETEA-LU Federal Highway Administration grant for new sidewalks along U.S. Route 6 (Main Street). Planning and Design currently underway, construction is forecast for 2015.
1. List of Team members tasked with the development of the Opportunity Agenda. Team members may include members of the public, private and not for profit sectors. Identify the Team Leader.
 - 1) Mayor James J. Schoenig – Team Leader
 - 2) Christine Piccini, Deputy Mayor Village of Brewster – Deputy Team Leader
 - 3) Meghan Taylor, President of the Putnam County Economic Development Corporation.
 - 4) Jack Gress, Local property owner, business owner, and Zoning Board Member
 - 5) Dan Birmingham, Bond Counsel, Former Trustee, Planning Board Member, Zoning Board Member, Putnam County Legislator
 - 6) Richard O’Rourke, ESQ. Village of Brewster Justice, Attorney specializing in Land Use
 - 7) Harold Lepler, Covington Properties - Developer
 - 8) Adrienne Spadaccini, ESQ. – Pattern for Progress Fellow, Attorney Putnam County Risk Management, Co-author of Envision Brewster
 - 9) Bob Dumont, Local Business owner and community advocate

 2. The MHREDC Strategic plan outlines goals that are completely in line with the Village of Brewster’s goals of the redevelopment and revitalization of the community.
 - Leverage the region’s outstanding natural resources, its tourism industry, and agriculture in a “natural infrastructure” strategy that protects agriculture and the environment and recognizes these as important to tourism and as quality of life attributes that are critical to attracting and retaining high-quality jobs for all key industry sectors.
 - The Village and local non-profits will be working with Putnam County Director of Tourism; Libby Pataki on the 2013 CFA’s to ensure the promotion of the historic aspects of the area.
 - Improve key regional infrastructure to make the region more business-ready.
 - Part of the overall goals of the redevelopment/revitalization of the Village are to create an environment that is ready for high level industry which would include updating broadband service, and improving the sewer and water infrastructure.
 - Foster housing investment to attract jobs to the region, create construction jobs, and support the overall health of the regional economy through a vibrant housing market.
 - The Village has identified the fact that the housing stock is below standard throughout the business district (over 15% blighted properties along the Main Street corridor) and the improvement of these properties would assist in the revitalization of the community.

The MHREC Strategic Plan outlines the importance of supporting the revitalization of our urban centers as engines of regional prosperity, embracing inter-regional partnerships that leverage cross-region resources, making the Mid-Hudson region more attractive to young educated professionals in order to stop “youth flight” and “brain drain” in the region and aligning public-private support to ensure implementation of the regional Plan and consideration of new opportunities. This application for designation as an Opportunity Area for the Village of Brewster not only addresses each of these goals set forth by the MHREC but demonstrates the capacity to achieve them.

3. Letters of support from Mayor Schoenig, County Executive MaryEllen Odell, and Town of Southeast Supervisor Tony Hay, and are also included.
4. The CFA Round III Funding competition is vital for the future development of the he Village of Brewster. The potential 2013 CFA opportunities listed below are just a snap shot to the drive and passion of not only the Village of Brewster but the local non-profits and private sector businesses on the revitalization of the Village. The projects listed will create jobs, improve infrastructure, address workforce training and address the challenge for Brewster’s Main Street, which is the current lack of attractions to draw visitors and foot traffic from outside communities. Outside of the train station and the small local diner, there is a considerable dearth of office space and attractions such as theatres, art studios, shops and boutiques, restaurants and recreation. In short, the Village will initiate focused development, establishing a core niche market, which will support further revitalization of the village center.

Potential 2013 CFA Opportunities:

- Garden Street School Adaptive Re-Use Feasibility Study
- Village of Brewster sewer line extension to include future businesses
- Village of Brewster Comprehensive Plan Feasibility Study to create a Transit Oriented Destination in the Village of Brewster
- Stateline Enterprises: Stateline Enterprises is poised to be the first alcoholic manufacturer in New York State to operate an onsite craft brewery and distillery all under one roof and would employ 30 – 50 people. Stateline is proposing to be located at 988 Route 22 a 16,000 square foot former catering hall in Brewster, NY.
- The Town of Southeast Cultural Arts Coalition (TOSCAC) will be requesting funding for the renovation and reopening of the Old Town Hall Theater, a historic landmark within the Village of Brewster and a perfect venue to serve as a cultural hub – it has been described as a “Jewel in the Center of Brewster” and its renovation will help foster the revitalization of downtown Brewster. TOSCAC was established to promote and raise funds for the development and effective management of affordable, accessible performance space that will provide opportunities to participate in and appreciate cultural arts and education, including lectures, classes, theater, dance, film, music, visual arts, and inclusive community events.
- The Landmarks Preservation Society of Southeast will be requesting funding to create an outdoor amphitheater at The Walter Brewster House (a 160 year old home with a great lawn in the middle of the Village). The amphitheater would be a tremendous opportunity for the Village as it would be a catalyst for development and attraction of people to the Village of Brewster.