

NY Forward - Capital Region

Watervliet

Public Workshop #1

August 13, 2026



NY Forward

Welcome!

This is an interactive public workshop to get feedback on the **vision and goals for the City of Watervliet downtown.**

- We'll start with a brief overview of the NY Forward program and some key demographic highlights.
- Then we'll break into small groups to discuss needs, challenges, goals, and opportunities.
- What we do today will lay the foundation for how projects that are submitted for funding are evaluated.



Entrance to Hudson Shores Park

We want to hear from you!

How to stay involved after this workshop:



Agenda:

Discuss the projects that have been submitted through the Open Call.

www.WatervlietNYF.com



Send a note any time to:
WatervlietNYF@gmail.com

Overview of NY Forward program



NY Forward

What is NY Forward?

- The DRI program was launched in 2016 to improve the vitality of urban centers across the State.
- The 10 Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC's) select communities for significant investment to transform the downtown economy.
- This year is the fourth round of NY Forward, which applies the same approach as DRI, but to smaller downtowns, with a **\$4.5m** grant award.
- Each community prepares a Strategic Investment Plan to identify specific projects to promote downtown revitalization.

*"The NY Forward program focuses on creating **healthy, vibrant, walkable downtowns** that catalyze sustainable economic development and accrue numerous economic, social, and environmental benefits to the locality, the region, and the State as a whole."*



DRI and NY Forward Program Goals



Create an active downtown with a strong sense of place that reflects the community's heritage and culture.



Attract new businesses that create a robust mix of shopping, entertainment, and service options for residents and visitors, and that provide job opportunities for a variety of skills and salaries.



Enhance public spaces for arts and cultural events that serve the existing members of the community but also draw in visitors from around the region.



Cultivate a variety of housing opportunities that help build an inclusive and welcoming community.



Grow local tax revenue.



Provide amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality of life for people of all ages, abilities, incomes, and backgrounds.



Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support investments that are more resilient to future climate change impacts.

Local Planning Committee

Co-Chairs

Charles Patricelli

Mayor, City of Watervliet

Amanda Vitullo

Manager of Economic Development for National Grid, NY-East

Members

Dylan Brickner

Watervliet Civic Center

Shawn Burke

BSNB Bank

Craig Clermont

Carrow Real Estate Services

Janet Cusson

Resident

Whitney Gitman

Watervliet Public Library

Tom Hulihan

Watervliet ZBA

Michelle Jamrosz

Resident

Bob Passonno

Watervliet Elks Club

Eli Sands

Watervliet Planning Board

Dr. Donald Stevens

Watervliet City School District

State Agencies

Department of State (DOS) will provide guidance and support for the planning process, manage the consultant team, assist in meeting preparation, and participate in review of documents.

- Matt Smith, Matthew.Smith@dos.ny.gov
- Gina DaBiere-Gibbs, Gina.DaBiere-Gibbs@dos.ny.gov

Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) will provide expertise in housing development, CDBG, and HCR grants and programs.

- Taylor Disco, Taylor.Disco@hcr.ny.gov

Empire State Development (ESD) representative will provide broad knowledge of development and information about State revitalization funding programs.

- Mary Elise Rees, MaryElise.Rees@esd.ny.gov

NYSERDA will provide technical assistance related to decarbonization strategies and funding sources.

Consultant Team

BURO HAPPOLD

Ian Nicholson, Ian.Nicholson@BuroHappold.com

project management and revitalization strategy

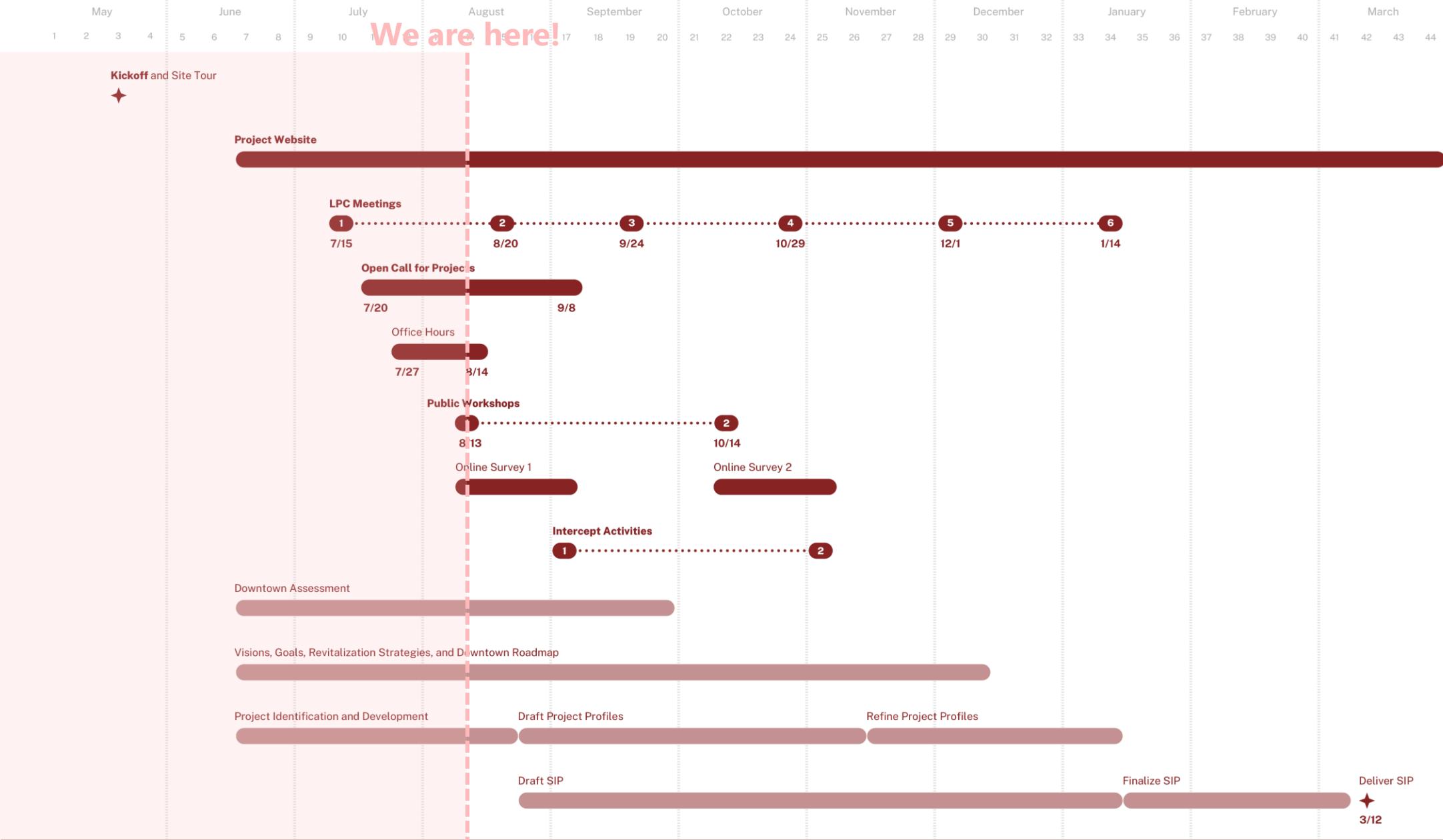
INTERBORO

Daniel D'Oca, Dan@InterboroPartners.com

public engagement, architecture, urban design

with:

EDR, LaBella, KB Engineering, and Stock Studios
Photography



LPC Meetings

- Venue: **Senior Center**
- LPC Meeting #2: **Aug 20, 6:00-8:00pm**
- LPC Meeting #3: **Sep 24, 6:00-8:00pm**
- LPC Meeting #4: **Oct 29, 6:00-8:00pm**
- LPC Meeting #5: **Dec 1, 6:00-8:00pm**
- LPC Meeting #6: **Jan 14, 6:00-8:00pm***
- All are open to the public and include time for public comment.

** If needed*



Public Workshops

Public Workshop #1 – **IN PROGRESS!**

What Would You Like to See Downtown?

- Solicit ideas and feedback about the Vision Statement and Goals
- Gather information about the present-day downtown and ideas for the future

Public Workshop #2 – Oct 14, 5:00-7:00pm

What Do You Think of the Proposed Projects?

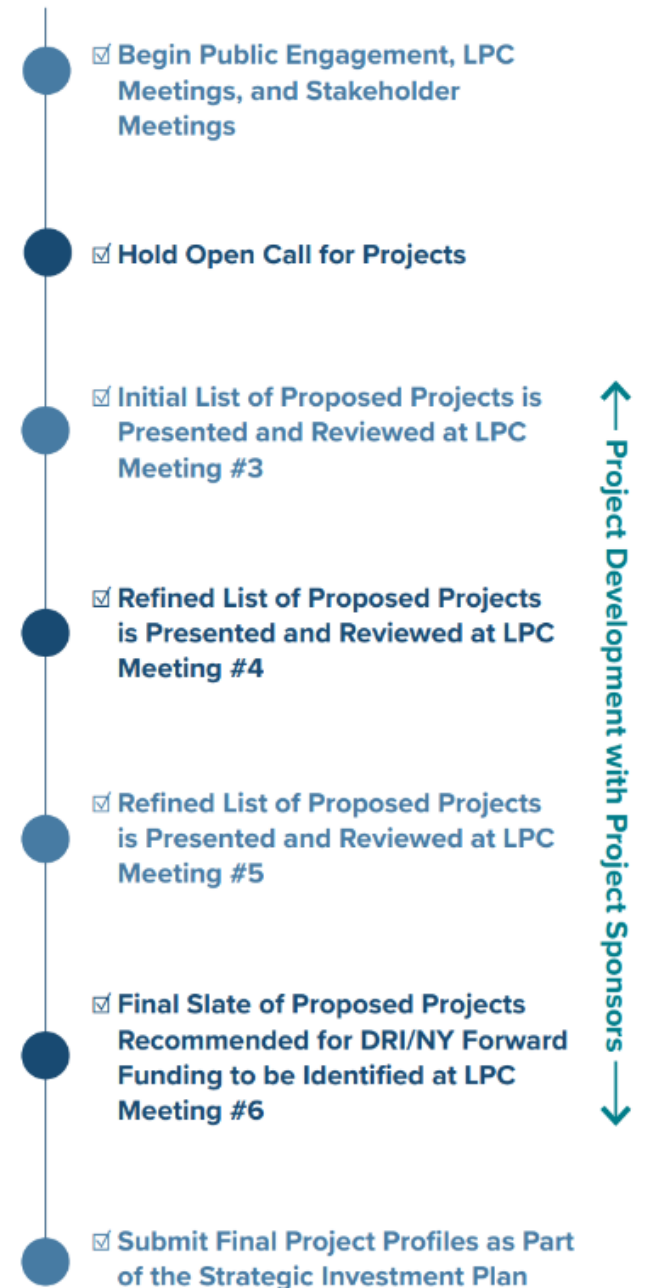
- Familiarize the public with the projects and solicit feedback for the sponsors
- Understand which projects best align with Vision and Goals for downtown Scotia



NY Forward Round 3 Greenwich Public Workshop

Project Development Process

1. Project Sponsors propose projects through the **Open Call for Projects**
2. Sponsors then develop Projects further, with support from:
 - Consultant team
 - State agencies (DOS, HCR, ESD, NYSERDA)
 - Municipal representatives
 - Outside entities (SBDC's, EAC's, CDFI's)
3. LPC evaluates Projects according to set criteria
4. Strategic Investment Plan submitted to State, including non-ranked slate of Projects totaling \$6-8 million recommended investment



Open Call for Projects

- **All Projects must go through this process**
- All Projects must be submitted by a Project Sponsor with the capacity to execute
- Open, fair, and transparent process for LPC to vet project proposals
- Allows LPC and consultant team to obtain information in a consistent manner
- **Submission through the Open Call does not guarantee inclusion in the final plan**

How to Submit Your Project

- 1 Review the Eligibility Criteria and Project Requirements**
on pages 3-4 to learn about requirements for projects and to make sure your project is eligible to be considered for NY Forward funding.
- 2 Review the Local Vision, Goals, and Evaluation Criteria**
on pages 5-6 to learn about the vision and goals for Watervliet's downtown and about how the Local Planning Committee (LPC) and State will evaluate projects. Stay up to date with the process and refer to the draft and final vision and goals on the website to ensure your project is consistent with the vision for downtown.
- 3 Consider consulting with an Architect/Engineer/General Contractor/ Vendor**
to help define the project scope of work, review the existing conditions, code requirements, and design feasibility, and develop realistic budgets.
- 4 Attend Open Call Information Session, Office Hours, or Other Opportunities to Meet with the Consultant Team**
to learn more about the process and project requirements. Check the website for information about how to attend or sign up.
- 5 Fill out the Project Form**
on pages 7-16. Address each topic thoroughly and completely. The LPC will use this information to consider projects to be included in the City of Watervliet's Strategic Investment Plan.
- 6 Submit your Completed Application**
Submit your completed application (and any supplemental materials) either electronically, in-person, or by mail no later than **Tuesday, September 8 at 4pm.**

→ **To submit online:**

Go to WatervlietNYF.com

→ **To submit via email:**

Email your completed application and any supplemental materials to WatervlietNYF@gmail.com

→ **To submit a hard copy:**

Mail or Hand-deliver to:
Attn: General Manager, Room 7
City Hall, 2 15th Street
Watervliet, NY 12189

Email notification of submission to:
WatervlietNYF@gmail.com

- ? All applicants are highly encouraged to schedule a meeting to discuss project details. To schedule a meeting to ask questions regarding project eligibility, evaluation, or the project form please contact **Ian Nicholson** at WatervlietNYF@gmail.com.**

Open Call for Projects

Jul 20 Launched

Jul 27-Aug 14 Technical assistance*

Aug 25 Deadline for questions

Sep 8 (4pm) Deadline to submit

* Link to sign-up sheet posted to:

WatervlietNYF.com

Email address for questions and project submissions:

WatervlietNYF@gmail.com

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	7/13		7/15 LPC-1			
	7/20 OPEN CALL					
	7/27	OFFICE HOURS	OFFICE HOURS	OFFICE HOURS	OFFICE HOURS	
	8/3		OFFICE HOURS	OFFICE HOURS	OFFICE HOURS	
	8/10		OFFICE HOURS	8/13 PUBLIC WORK SHOP	OFFICE HOURS	
	8/17			8/20 LPC-2		
	8/24	8/25 Q&A DUE				
	8/31					
	9/7	9/8 APPS DUE				

Project Development

Eligible Project Types

- New development and/or rehabilitation of existing downtown buildings (may include design fees)
- Public improvement projects
- Small Project Fund
 - Locally managed, \$300,000 max
 - 25% matching requirement
- Branding and marketing
 - for public purposes

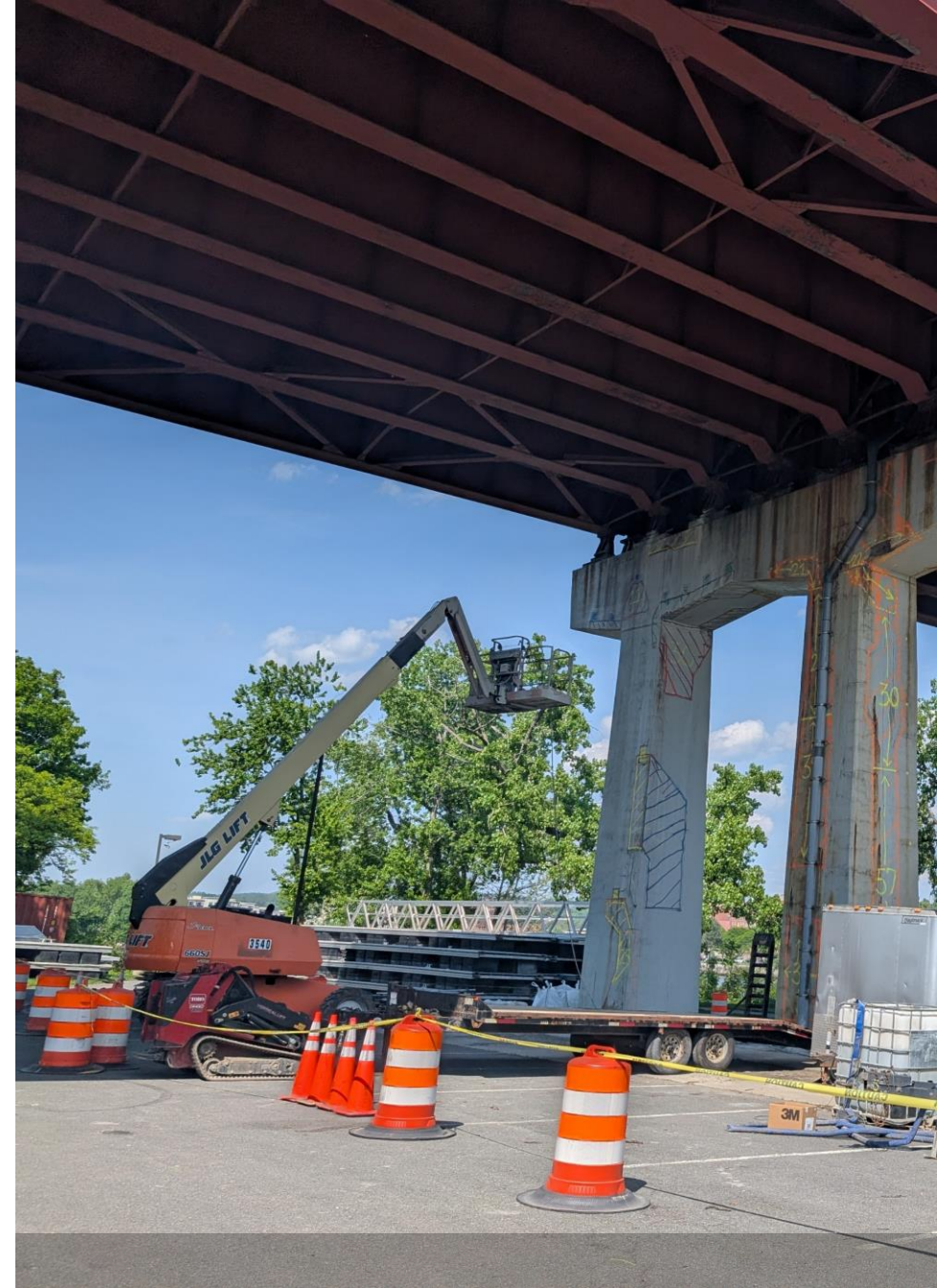
Ineligible Activities

- Standalone planning activities
- Operations and maintenance
- Pre-award costs
- Property acquisition
- Training and other program expenses

Project Development

Project Requirements

- Shovel-ready within 2 years
- Project size/scale – large enough to be transformative
 - Smaller projects (<\$150k) use Small Project Interest Letter
- Project sponsor capacity – public, non-profit, or private entities
- Financing: ***Sponsor must carry pre-reimbursement costs***
- Matching and leverage: ***at least 25% for private sponsors***
- Decarbonization



NY Forward in Watervliet



NY Forward



NY Forward Boundary

** Can be modified or adjusted at discretion of Local Planning Committee.*

** Sponsors with potential projects just outside the boundary are therefore encouraged to submit their application thru the Open Call*



NY Forward



Preliminary Downtown Vision

*“Watervliet envisions a vibrant, connected city where its historic 19th Street corridor and Hudson River waterfront once again form the heart of community life. Building on its strong **working-class heritage** and strategic location within New York’s Capital Region, the City will transform its compact downtown into a lively, walkable center of business, culture, and recreation. Future investments will reconnect residents and visitors to the Hudson River through improved access to Hudson Shores Park and the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail, while a proposed pedestrian tunnel at 16th Street will knit together neighborhoods long divided by I-787. Along 19th Street and 2nd Avenue, revitalized storefronts, new housing, and enhanced streetscapes will **foster small business growth and downtown living**. Modern infrastructure, green streets, and public art will reinforce Watervliet’s identity as a **resilient, forward-looking waterfront city**. With NY Forward support, Watervliet will realize its promise as a welcoming, inclusive, and dynamic gateway where heritage meets tomorrow.”*

Preliminary Downtown Goals

- **Goal 1:** Strengthen resilience and sustainability through infrastructure investments and climate action.
- **Goal 2:** Expand access to parks and the waterfront through enhanced public spaces, recreational amenities, and multimodal connections.
- **Goal 3:** Improve housing opportunities and foster neighborhood stability to create a more walkable, inclusive community for all generations.
- **Goal 4:** Grow a resilient and innovative local economy that creates jobs while leveraging the City's assets and role as a regional connector.

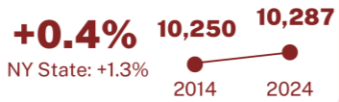


Aerial of 19th Street

Watervliet Demographic Snapshot

Data Source: Census American Community Survey (2014-2024)

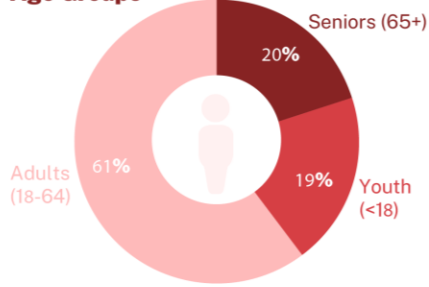
Population Growth



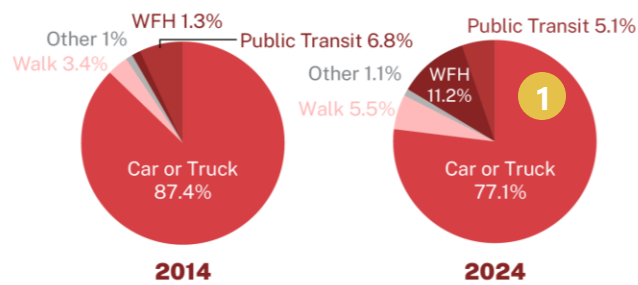
40.8

Median Age
NY State: 39.8

Age Groups



Method of Transportation to Work



5,090

Households

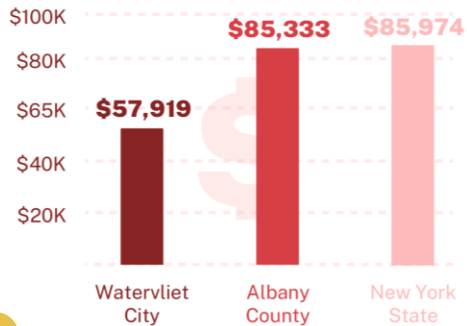
+350

Households
Since 2014

2.01

Household Size
NY State: 2.49

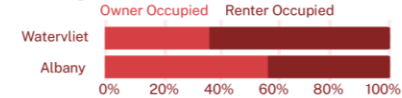
Median Household Income



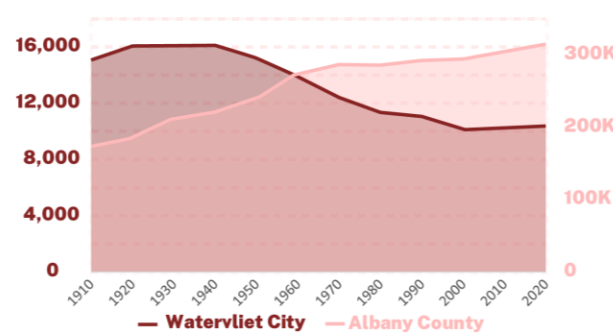
Median Housing Price



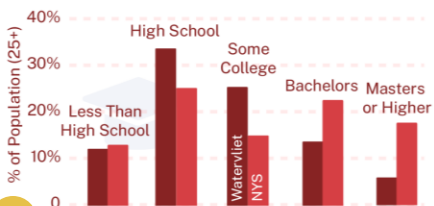
Housing Units



Historical Population



Highest Educational Attainment



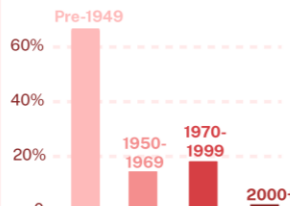
10%

Vacant Units
Albany County: 8.8%

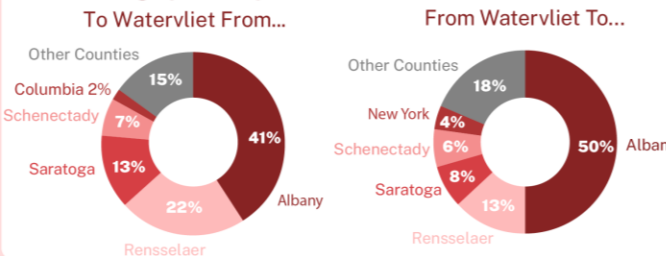
4.5%

Unemployment Rate
NY State: 6.4%

Housing Year Built



Commuting by County



1 **Work-from-home** percentage increased 8.6x from 2014 to 2024.

2 City **population peaked during WWII**, with a near-50% slide that has stabilized since 2000. Albany County has seen modest growth throughout this period.

3 Home values are **roughly half compared to Albany County**.

4 Nearly 2/3 of Watervliet's **housing units are more than 75 years old**.

5 Household incomes and educational attainment are significantly lower than NY State averages.

Potential Strengths & Opportunities

- More than **\$36.5m invested** in public infrastructure, private businesses, and community amenities
- Immediate access to **regional job centers** and **educational institutions**
- Strong local economy anchored by the **Watervliet Arsenal** and **Watervliet Innovation Center**
- Relatively **stable long-term population** base
- Connectivity to nearby cities via **CDTA bus lines** and **CDPHP bikeshare**
- **Affordable housing market** strengthened by **Watervliet Housing Authority** programs for low-income families
- **Community-driven** planning and strong civic and philanthropic engagement
- **Outdoor recreation** opportunities at Hudson Shores Park and the Empire State Trail

Potential Needs & Challenges

- **Limited connectivity** to the Hudson River due to I-787
- **Aging housing** stock
- Poor condition of **pedestrian infrastructure** and alleys
- **Underinvestment** in commercial properties
- Market housing values and rental rates **insufficient to support construction costs**
- **Uneven quality** of public spaces
- Larger population with **income below the poverty line** than the County

Questions?

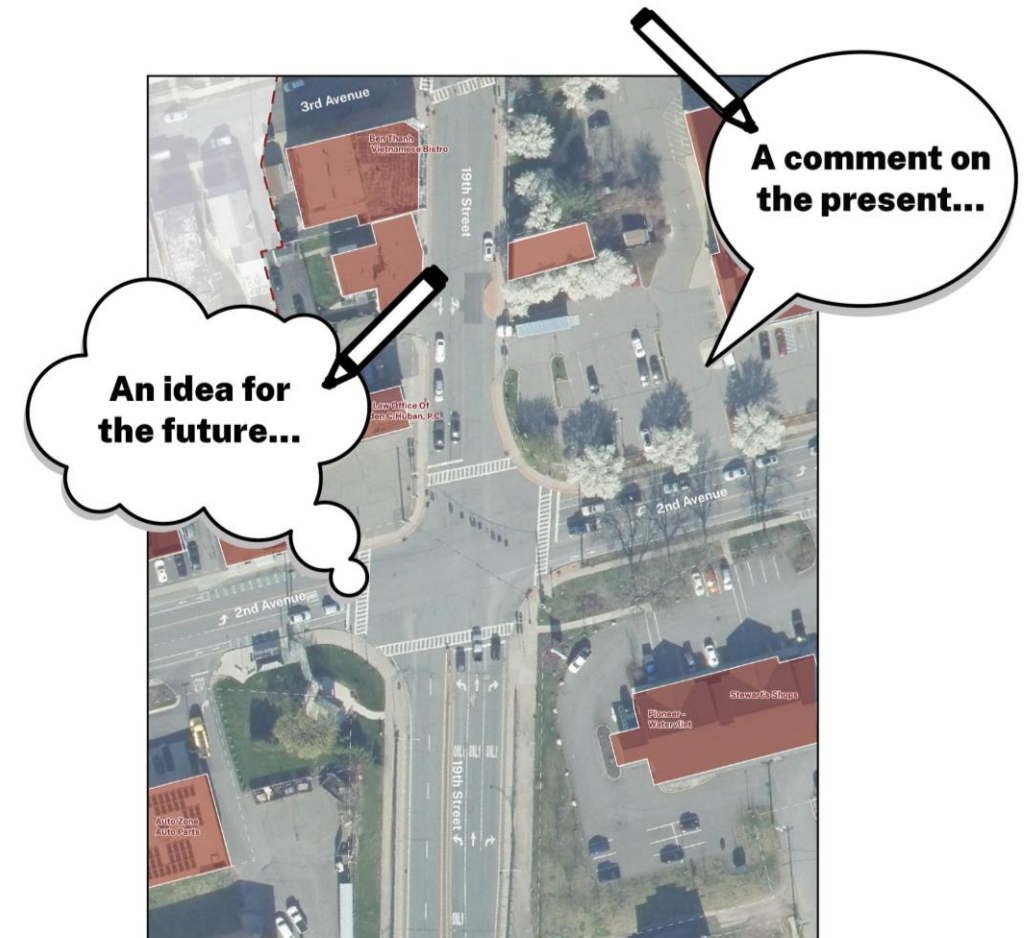
Two Options

Share your vision and goals for Watervliet NY Forward!

Add your **comments on the present** and **ideas for the future** on the walking tour map.

Option One: Walking Tour

- Three groups
 - 19th Street
 - 2nd Ave
 - Hudson Shores Park
- Each group will have a walking tour guide and a handout
- As you walk and talk with the group, write down your ideas and comments on the handout



Two Options

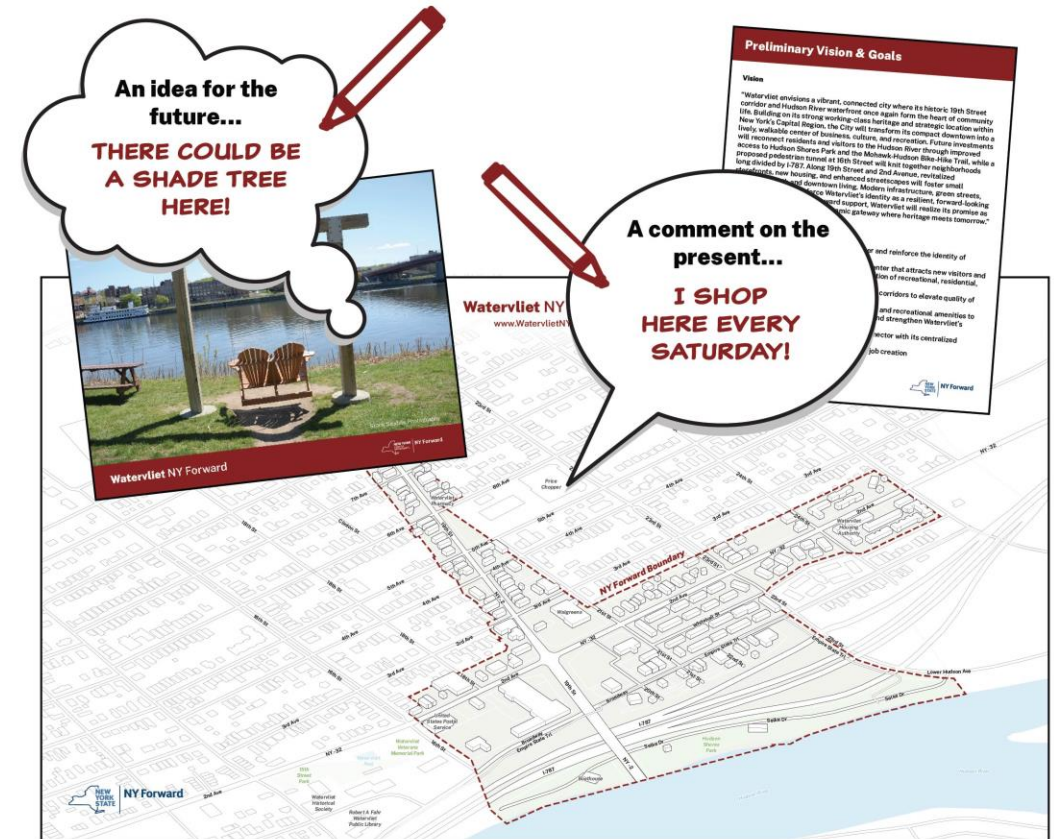
Option Two: Table Activity

- Discuss your ideas for the NY Forward area around the engagement table
- Place your comments and ideas over the tabletop map, image cards, and vision and goals sheet

Vision & Goals Activity

Share your vision and goals for Watervliet NY Forward!

Add your **comments on the present** and **ideas for the future** on the provided shapes and place them over the tabletop map, image cards, or the vision and goals sheet.



Walking Tour Logistics

- **Schedule:**

- 6:30pm: Depart from **Senior Center**
- 7:30pm: Reconvene for discussion at **Senior Center**
- 8:00pm: Conclude workshop

- **Route:**

- "19th Street" group walks on 19th Street
- "Second Street" group walks on Second Street
- "Hudson Shores Park" group walks along the waterfront

- **Distance:** about 2 miles at most

Walking Tour Groups

Walking Group Leaders

- Ian Nicholson (Buro Happold)
- Daniel D'Oca (Interboro)
- Ashley Dominguez (Buro Happold)
- Kate Chapman (Interboro)
- Doris Qingyi Duanmu (Interboro)
- Patrick O'Shea (EDR)



Let's Discuss!