

Public Workshop #1 - Overview

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- Opening remarks from Co-Chair
- NY Forward Overview Presentation
 - Public Q&A
- Breakout Activity
 - Walking tours of 19th Street, 2nd Ave, and Hudson Shores Park
 - Comments on present & ideas for future
 - Sharing thoughts on vision and goals
- Group Discussion



Map of the NY Forward area with public comments

Who was there?

- About **24** Participants
- State team
 - NY DOS: Matt Smith, Gina DaBiere-Gibbs
- Consultant Team
 - Buro Happold: Ian Nicholson, Ashley Dominguez
 - Interboro: Daniel D'Oca, Kate Chapman, Doris Qingyi Duanmu
 - EDR: Patrick O'Shea



Public Workshop Advertisement









Engagement by the numbers

Topic	Written	Verbal	Combined
Business & Downtown Activity	13	39	52
Pedestrian Safety & Infrastructure	15	29	44
Streets & Traffic	5	37	42
Parks, Recreation & Public Space	13	24	37
Trees, Landscaping & Sustainability	4	33	37
Housing & Development	5	18	23
Waterfront & Connections	4	11	15
Character, History & Identity	3	—	3
Parking	2	—	2
Total	64	191	255

Key Findings

1. Connectivity, walkability, and pedestrian safety emerged as the strongest theme.
2. Hudson Shores Park is a major asset, but it is disconnected from the rest of Watervliet.
3. There is a desire for more everyday destinations and places to gather.
4. 19th Street could function more like a neighborhood main street and less like a regional thoroughfare.
5. Successful housing opportunities need to be accessible and well connected to various services and destinations.
6. Sustainability can include tangible goals like the comfort, maintenance, and performance of public investments.
7. Watervliet could benefit from stronger gateways and a clearer sense of arrival.

1

Connectivity, walkability, and pedestrian safety emerged as the strongest themes.

Comments on the present

- Watervliet is compact enough to be highly walkable, but major traffic and the current mobility infrastructure make many short trips unnecessarily difficult or uncomfortable.
- There's fast traffic on 19th Street and 2nd Avenue, along with difficult crossings, inconsistent pedestrian signals, sidewalk conditions, and conflicts among buses, bicycles, pedestrians, and vehicles.

• Ideas for the future

- Prioritize safer crossings, accessible sidewalks, traffic calming, transit access, bicycle connections, and clear routes between major destinations.

• Implication

- Pedestrian safety could become an explicit NY Forward priority rather than an implied component of several different goals.

2

Hudson Shores Park is a major asset, but it is disconnected from the rest of Watervliet.

Comments on the present

- The waterfront attracts many residents and visitors including walkers, dog owners, cyclists, boaters, and concert and restaurant goers.
- The existing pedestrian and bicycle routes make it difficult and dangerous to get to the waterfront.

• Ideas for the future

- Create a safe connection between the park and the surrounding neighborhood.
- Improve landscaping, enhance visibility and signage, expand recreation and docking opportunities, strengthen the rowing facilities, mitigate highway noise.

• Implication

- The most important waterfront investment may not be another attraction within Hudson Shores Park, but rather the connection between the park and the rest of Watervliet.

3

There is a desire for more everyday destinations and places to gather.

Comments on the present

- Many residents described the city primarily as a place to live and work rather than a place to spend leisure time.
- There is an absence of coffee shops, restaurants, and gathering.

• Ideas for the future

- Create more “third places” and destinations within the city where residents and families could have fun without leaving the city.

• Implication

- Goal 4 could include destination-oriented businesses, gathering places, family recreation, and activation of existing commercial corridors.

4 19th Street could function more like a neighborhood main street and less like a regional thoroughfare.

Comments on the present

- Many life-long residents reflected on 19th Street's past, and recalled a corridor with shops, services, trees, and reasons to walk from one destination to another.
- There are a handful of businesses that have been around for a long-time, but there are no longer central hubs and destinations along 19th Street with a concentration of businesses.

• Ideas for the future

- Leverage existing opportunities for reinvestment, such as vacant and underutilized storefronts and former commercial properties.
- Activate the street and highlight Watervliet's character through smaller investments like outdoor seating, street trees, and façade restoration.

• Implication

- Investments on 19th Street could combine economic activation, building rehabilitation, infill development, pedestrian safety, and public-realm improvements.

5

Successful housing opportunities need to be accessible and well connected to various services and destinations.

Comments on the present

- It is difficult for residents, particularly seniors and residents of Watervliet Housing Authority, to access services.
- Poor sidewalk conditions and missing crosswalks create barriers for connectivity.

• Ideas for the future

- Create safe and accessible routes to pharmacies, groceries, transit, parks, and other daily services.

• Implication

- Goal 3 could further emphasize the connection between housing opportunities and accessible services and pedestrian safety.

6 Sustainability can include tangible goals like the comfort, maintenance, and performance of public investments.

Comments on the present

- The lack of street trees and shade was immediately apparent on the Second Ave walking tour.
- Highway noise is an issue at Hudson Shores Park.

• Ideas for the future

- Consider native or water-tolerant planting at Hudson Shores Park to enhance the appearance of the waterfront and reduce maintenance demands.
- Expand the City's tree canopy.

• Implication

- Goal 1 could translate “resilience and sustainability” into tangible outcomes including shade, green infrastructure, resilient design, and maintainable landscaping.

7 Watervliet could benefit from stronger gateways and a clearer sense of arrival.

Comments on the present

- Watervliet was described as a place people pass through on their way to Albany, Troy, Latham, or elsewhere.
- Drivers can enter the city without a strong visual cue that they have arrived in a neighborhood where people live, work, and shop.

• Ideas for the future

- Strengthen neighborhood gateways and improve wayfinding to encourage drivers to slow down.

• Implication

- Gateway improvements, wayfinding, public art, landscaping, and traffic calming could simultaneously strengthen community identity, improve safety, and capture more regional visitors.

Location: Intersection of 19th Street and 2nd Ave



Comment

"When Watervliet was more walkable, this used to be a community hub."



Idea

"Treat this intersection as a major gateway to the city!"



Location: Grassy area in front of Price Chopper



Comment

"This space is underutilized."



Idea

"Explore mixed-use commercial or housing infill here!"



Location: 19th Street and 8th Avenue



Comment

"This used to be a gas station and then it was an ice cream shop."



Idea

"Keep properties along 19th Street active and prioritize reuse!"



Location: Black Bear Inn



Comment

"19th Street used to be tree lined and have a small-town feel."



Idea

"Let's activate the street with outdoor seating!"



Location: 2nd Ave between 16th Street and 19th Street



Comment

"There are several underutilized properties."



Idea

"Add more housing and mixed-use development here!"



Location: 2nd Ave and 23rd Street



Comment

"Residents go to Latham for fun and recreation."



Idea

"There could be food trucks here or other family friendly activities."



Location: South of 16th Street



Comment

"There are more destinations south of 16th Street."



Idea

"More destinations for families and recreation!"



Location: 23rd Street under I-787



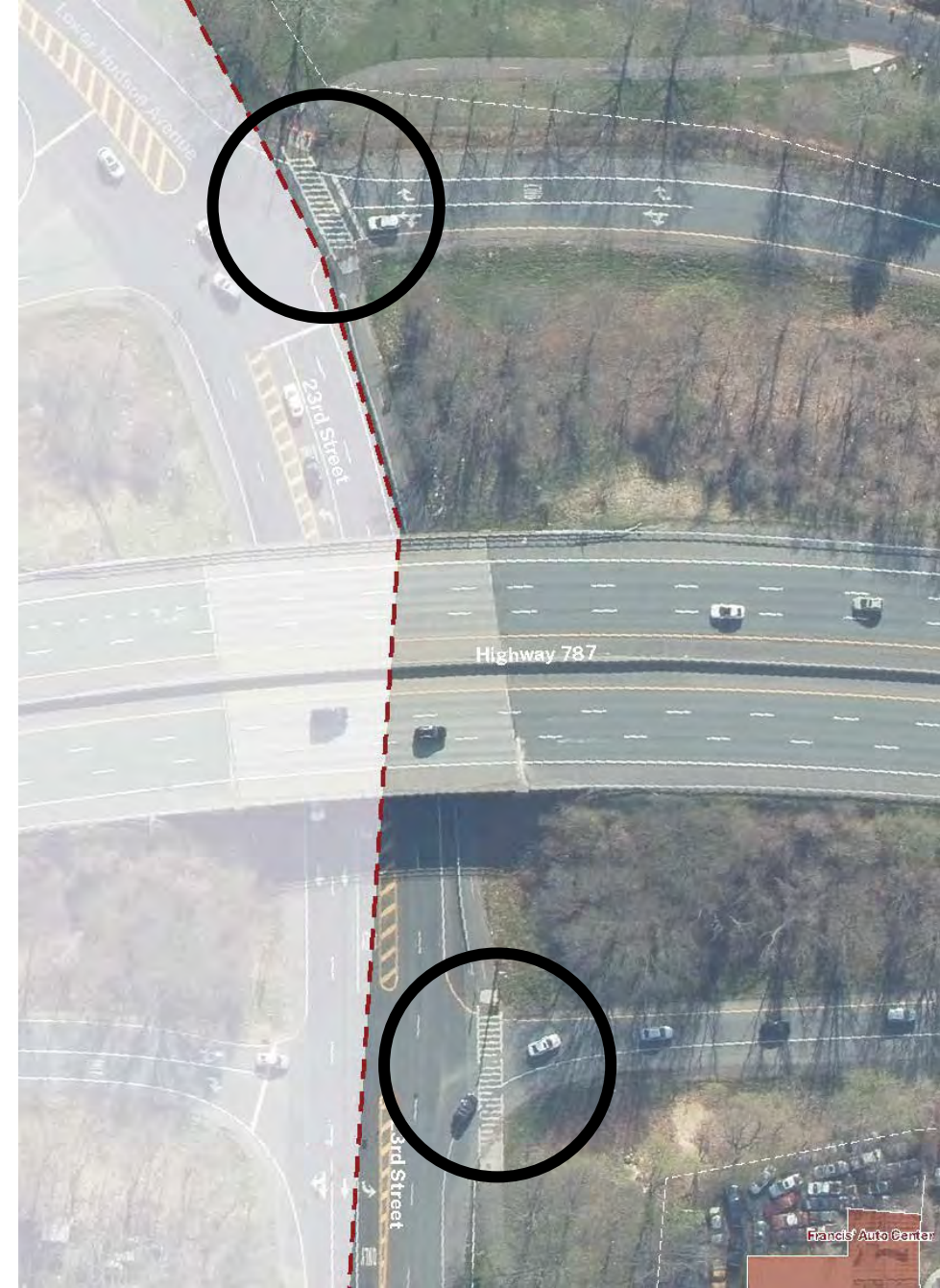
Comment

"Dangerous intersection! No pedestrian buttons."



Idea

"Advance the 16th Street connection to the park and improve other intersections!"



Location: Hudson Shores Park



Comment

"The restaurant and concert area bring visitors to the waterfront."



Idea

"Improve river access and visibility along with playground equipment."



Location: Hudson Shores Park



Comment

"The regional trail is a major asset, but some cyclists avoid the Watervliet waterfront segment because it is difficult to access."



Idea

"Make local connections to the trail safer."



Overall Takeaways

- The strongest lesson from the workshop is that Watervliet does not lack assets. The challenge is that many of its assets are disconnected from one another.
- The LPC could consider strengthening the vision around connections and how the slate of projects could work together to enhance Watervliet's existing assets.
- The workshop validated the direction of the four preliminary goals, but participants felt the goals could more specifically reflect the issues experienced during the walks, especially pedestrian safety, connectivity, destinations, and everyday quality of life.

Online Survey Summary

Purpose of the Survey

- Understand how well the NY Forward **Vision & Goals** align with public sentiment
- Identify community priorities for downtown revitalization
- Capture lived experiences from residents, workers, business owners, and visitors
- Provide clear guidance for **project selection** and **LPC decision-making**



Watervliet NY Forward Survey #1

Thank you for participating in this survey. This is an opportunity to contribute to a shared vision and goals for the future of the Watervliet NY Forward Area!

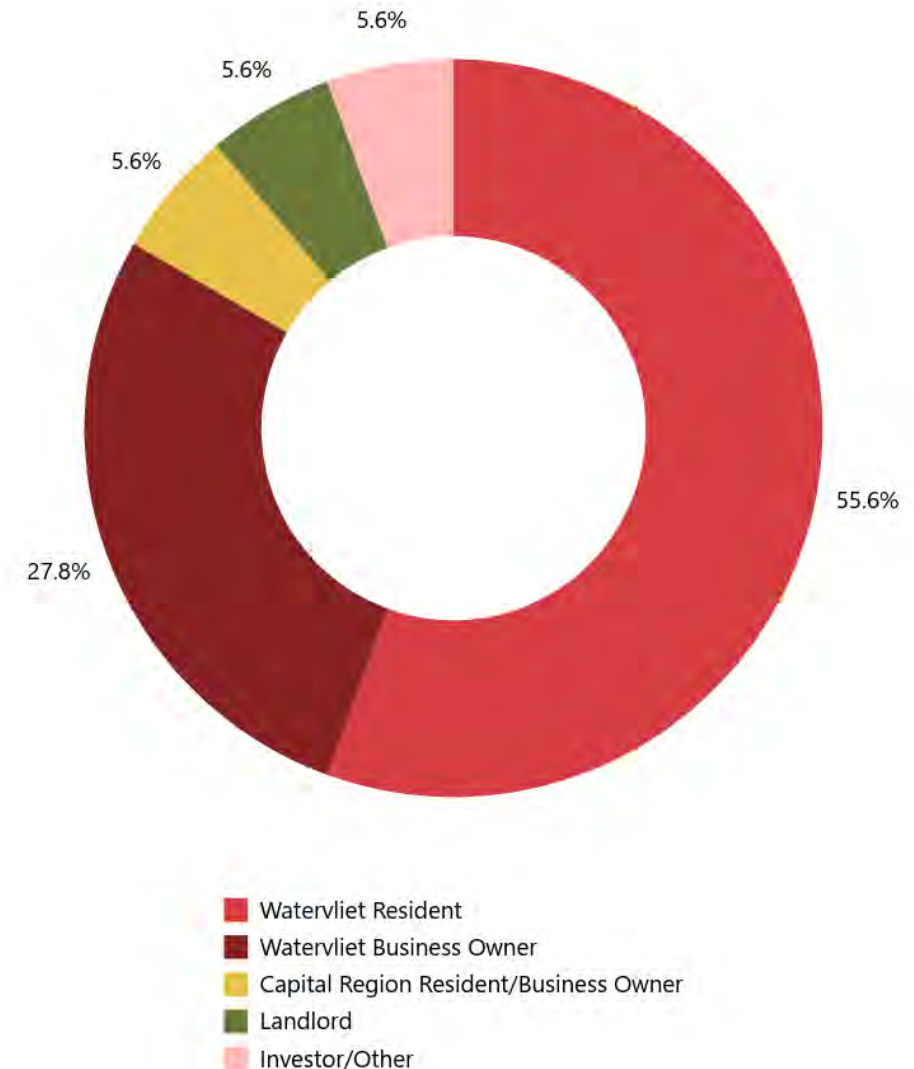
Please reference the NY Forward boundary area in the map below responding to the following questions.

NY Forward Boundary



Who Responded?

- Majority: **Watervliet residents** (including lifelong residents)
- Others: Capital Region residents, business owners, landlords, investors
- Strong representation from multi-generational families
- Mix of ages, neighborhoods, and perspectives



Top Investment Priorities



What People Love About Watervliet

- Tight-knit community & hometown pride
- Walkability and proximity to Troy, Albany, Latham
- Multi-generational roots
- Local institutions: Bob's Diner, Pat's Pub, Deacon Blues, Big Pool
- Empire State Trail and waterfront potential

"Just about everything. Lived here my entire life."

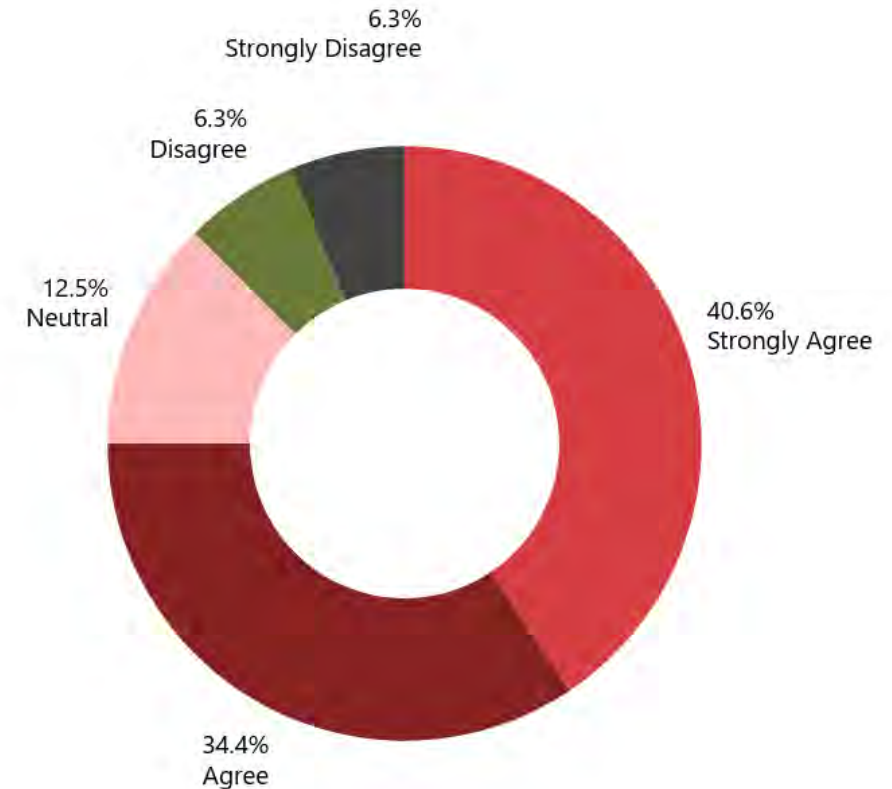
Key Concerns

- Crime and safety
- Absentee landlords & poorly maintained properties
- Youth programming gaps (ages 12–18)
- School quality and safety
- Vacant or “cheap-looking” storefronts
- Overgrown weeds, full garbage cans, lack of corridor care
- Limited waterfront access and amenities

“More garbage cans on 19th Street would help — DPW can’t do it all.”

Alignment with Vision

- Most respondents agreed with the vision and goals
- There were some concerns about the specific priorities or language used
- Respondents particularly agreed with these themes:
 - Walkability
 - Downtown Vitality
 - Waterfront Access
 - Public Safety
 - Beautification
 - Renter/Owner Balance



Alignment with Goals

- **Public priorities strongly reinforce the four goals**
- Goal 1: Resilience & Sustainability
 - Beautification, property maintenance, infrastructure concerns
- Goal 2: Parks & Waterfront Access
 - Strong desire for improved riverfront access and amenities
- Goal 3 Housing & Neighborhood Stability
 - Calls for owner-occupied housing, better property upkeep, balanced housing mix
- Goal 4 Local Economy & Downtown Vitality
 - Desire for better storefronts, more varied retail, events, nightlife, jobs

We want to hear more!

