

ALBANY 2030

The City of Albany Comprehensive Plan





Adopted April 2, 2012

THE VISION OF ALBANY IN 2030

Albany in 2030 has built on its history and diverse natural, cultural, institutional, and human resources to become a global model for sustainable revitalization and urban livability. The City promotes a balanced approach to economic opportunity, social equity, and environmental quality that is locally driven, encourages citizen involvement and investment, and benefits all residents.

THE VISION COMPONENTS

1. Safe, Livable Neighborhoods

Every neighborhood in Albany is a desirable place to live because of its walkable streets, historic architecture, range of housing choices, mixed-use neighborhood centers, quality schools, parks and recreation facilities, and easy access to Downtown Albany and other job centers.

2. Model Educational System

Albany nurtures its most valuable resources, its children, by promoting excellence in education at all levels. The City's institutions of higher education are valued resources and partners in initiatives to expand economic opportunities, enhance work force skills, and promote lifelong learning.

3. Vibrant Urban Center

As the capital of New York and a destination for work, play, and tourism, Albany is the region's primary center of government, education, health care, employment, and the arts. Downtown Albany is a vibrant mix of business, residential, educational, cultural, and entertainment uses connected to the Hudson River waterfront.

4. Multi-Modal Transportation Hub

Albany's neighborhoods and centers are connected to each other and to the rest of the region by an extensive, efficient, and safe network of complete streets, mass transit, bikeways, trails, and sidewalks.

5. Green City

Albany is a model of community health and sustainability in its planning, restorative development, and conservation of energy, water, and natural resources.

6. Prosperous Economy

The City is a pillar of the regional and global economies, providing good employment opportunities for all residents with a focus on green jobs and technology.

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This document was prepared for The City of Albany with assistance from the following individuals:

[Mayor Gerald D. Jennings](#)

2011 City of Albany Common Council:

Carolyn McLaughlin, President

Daniel Herring

Ronald E. Bailey

Joseph Igoe

Dominick Calsolaro

Jacqueline Jenkins-Cox

Frank Commisso, Jr.

Anton Konev

Richard Conti

Michael O'Brien

Catherine M. Fahey

John Rosenzweig

Lester Freeman

James P. Sano

Leah Golby

Barbara Smith

Albany 2030 Board:

Daniel Herring, Chair

Michael J. Yevoli, Vice Chair

Faye Andrews

Matt Baumgartner

Samantha Bosshart

Kathleen Cloutier

Nick D'Antonio

Elizabeth Doran

Catherine M. Fahey

Maxine Fantroy-Ford

Jeff Gritsavage

Ryan Hancox

Chris Hawver

Helen Klaeyesen

Chief Stephen Krokoff

Carolyn McLaughlin

Herbert McLaughlin

Louise McNeilly

Jeff Mirel

Sandra Misiewicz

Dennis Mosley

Brenda Motley

John Rosenzweig

James P. Sano

Robert Schofield

Gene Solan

Joseph Stellato

Karen Strong

Scott Townsend

Arlene Way

Community Advisory Committee on Sustainability:

Bill Bruce	Richard Lyons
John Bryant	Mary Ellen Mallia
Yusuf Burgess	Sue Nealon
Eric Dahl	David Riposo
Laura DeGaetano	Seth Rosenblum
Lisa Good	Patricia Salkin
Michael Hartman	Robert Schofield
Stephen Iachetta	Pete Sheehan
Mike Jacobson	Jodi Smits Anderson
Shridhar Karve	Brian Steinmuller
Scott Kellogg	Carrie Ward
Mark Lowery	

City of Albany Planning Staff:

Michael J. Yevoli, Commissioner	Kathleen Bronson, Senior Planner
Megan Daly, Deputy Commissioner	Brad Glass, Senior Planner
Douglas Melnick, AICP, Director	Mary Millus, Senior Planner
Sarah Reginelli, Principal Planner	Rich Nicholson, Senior Planner

Consultant Teams:

- Albany 2030
 - o Wallace Roberts & Todd (WRT)
 - o PlaceMatters.
 - o Eng-Wong, Taub & Associates
 - o Economic Stewardship, Inc.
- Climate Action Plan
 - o Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB)

City of Albany Leadership Team

Faye Andrews	Steve Longo
Michael Barber	Elizabeth Lyons
Sue Cleary	Keith McDonald
Robert Cross	Doug Melnick, AICP
Megan Daly	Luis Perez
John D'Antonio	John Reilly
Nick D'Antonio	Deirdre Rudolph
William Ferber	Jerry Spicer
Chief Robert Forezzi	Bob Van Amburgh
Richard Hendrick	Tara Wells
Jeffery Jamison, Esq.	Nala Woodward
Denise Kelly	Mike Yevoli
Chief Stephen Krokoff	

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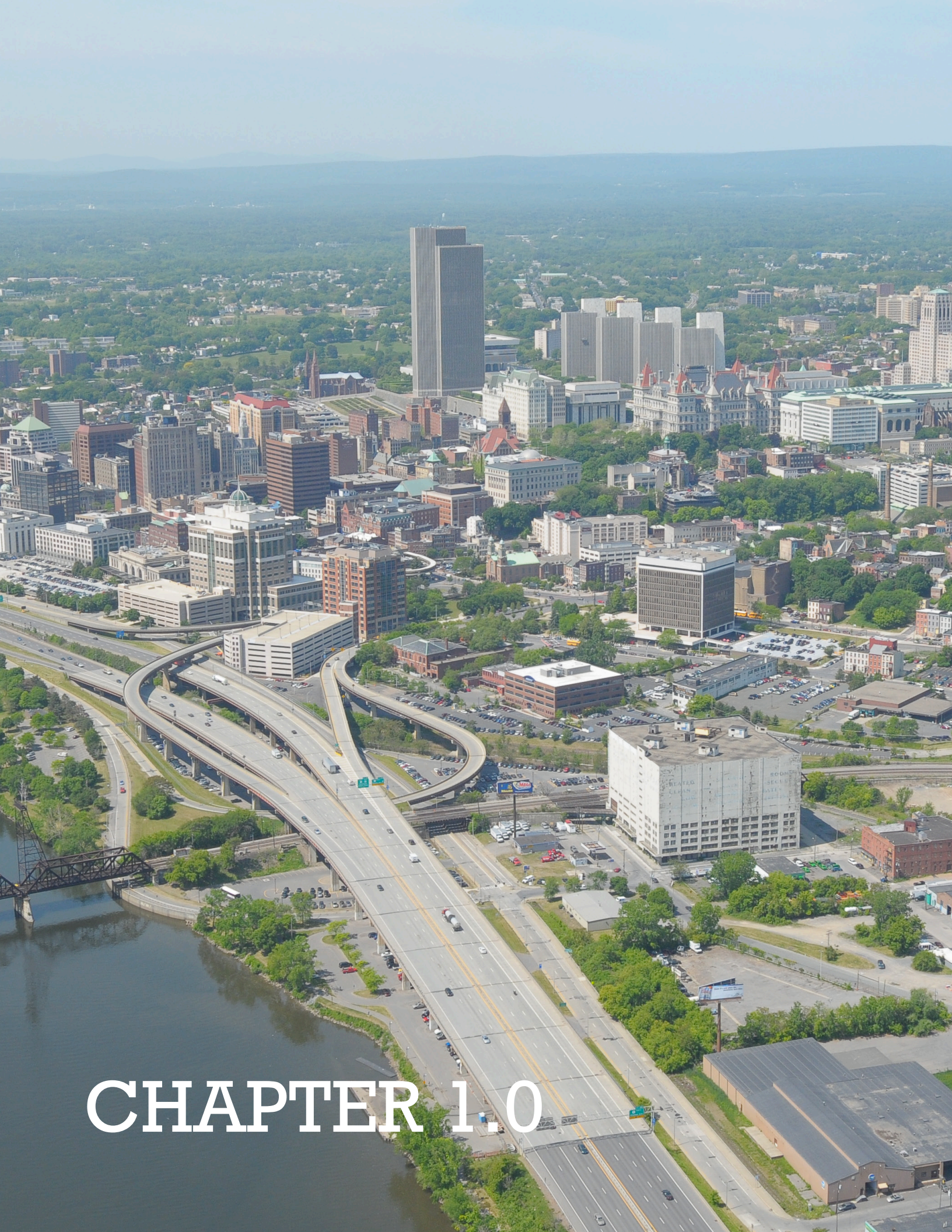
B – Public Outreach Summarized Results

C – Relevant Related Planning Documents

D – Climate Action Plan

E – Albany 2030 Data Book

*Aside from Appendix D, appendices are included for reference purposes only and do not imply ratification by the City of Albany Common Council.



CHAPTER 1.0

1.0 Introduction

1.1 WHY A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

Albany, New York's state capital, is a historic city located on the west bank of the Hudson River about 150 miles north of New York City. First settled by the Dutch in 1614, Albany is the one of the oldest surviving settlements of the original thirteen colonies and the longest continuously chartered city in the United States (since 1686). The City's deep history and heritage is reflected in its spectacular natural setting on the Hudson River, historic building stock, major institutions, downtown (the region's prime activity center), and the attachment of its residents to their neighborhoods.

The City of Albany has chosen a key juncture in its 400-year history to prepare its first ever comprehensive plan, given the accelerating rate of transition and change in the 21st century. Looking forward 20 years and beyond, the plan provides the opportunity to set a new direction for a sustainable, prosperous future. To fully appreciate the significance of Albany 2030 for the City and its residents, it is useful to consider the basic purposes of a comprehensive plan:

1. A Comprehensive Plan is an expression of citizens' values, aspirations, and shared vision of the future.

Just as one would not begin a journey without first identifying a destination, the process of developing the Albany 2030 Plan began with citizens articulating in numerous meetings and workshops the kind of place they would like Albany to become. The resulting Vision Statement (Chapter 2) defines citizens' expectations and directions for Albany by the year 2030, sets the mandate for the strategies and actions detailed in this Comprehensive Plan document, and provides the benchmark to measure implementation progress.

2. A Comprehensive Plan sets a citywide framework to define how all of the City's plans, initiatives, investments, etc. fit together.

Albany has prepared many plans over the years for different areas within the City (e.g., neighborhoods and corridors) and topical concerns (e.g., transportation improvements and economic development). City leaders regularly make decisions on capital investments and programs without the benefit of a comprehensive "lens" through which to evaluate broader, citywide implications. The Albany 2030 Plan provides the overall framework to ensure that all of these plans, programs, and investments are aligned to support a common direction for Albany's future.

3. A Comprehensive Plan is a guide for the management of change.

If the vision for Albany's future is to be realized, the Albany 2030 Plan must positively and deliberately influence how the City changes over time. To do so, the Plan must be actively used to guide how priorities are established, decisions are made, and actions are taken to advance Albany towards the vision. While city government will take a leadership role in this effort, the Plan calls on citizens, civic organizations, major public and private institutions, other levels of government, and businesses to coordinate efforts with a spirit of partnership and shared sense of direction.

4. A Comprehensive Plan is the foundation and reference point for policy and decision-making.

The "meat" of the Albany 2030 Plan is contained in Chapter 3, which defines specific policy directives (goals, strategies, and actions) for the functional components of the Plan. The Albany 2030 Plan takes a systems approach designed to leverage the interrelationships and synergies between these components (community form, economy, transportation, etc.) to achieve the Albany of the future envisioned by citizens. Integration of the goals, strategies, and actions into day-to-day decision-making, ongoing management and operations, and long-range planning by city government and its partners will be critical to the success of the Albany 2030 Plan.

5. A Comprehensive Plan is Albany's "to do" list.

The Albany 2030 Plan's influence on Albany's future will be a product of the motivating power of its shared vision and the effectiveness of actions taken to turn the vision into reality. The vision will be realized through steady progress made by adhering to a well-defined game plan that sets priorities for effective, short and long-term actions, as well as a process to monitor progress and adapt to changing circumstances. Chapter 4 of the Plan lays out a comprehensive program for action to produce tangible results in achieving the Albany 2030 Vision.

1.2 PLANNING CONTEXT

In accordance with New York State planning law regarding comprehensive planning, the Albany 2030 Plan addresses the City of Albany as a political jurisdiction. However, Albany is part of a larger region defined by natural and economic influences. The City is located in the Lower Hudson River Watershed, which makes up about 40% of the Hudson/Mohawk River Basin, one of the largest drainage areas on the eastern seaboard of

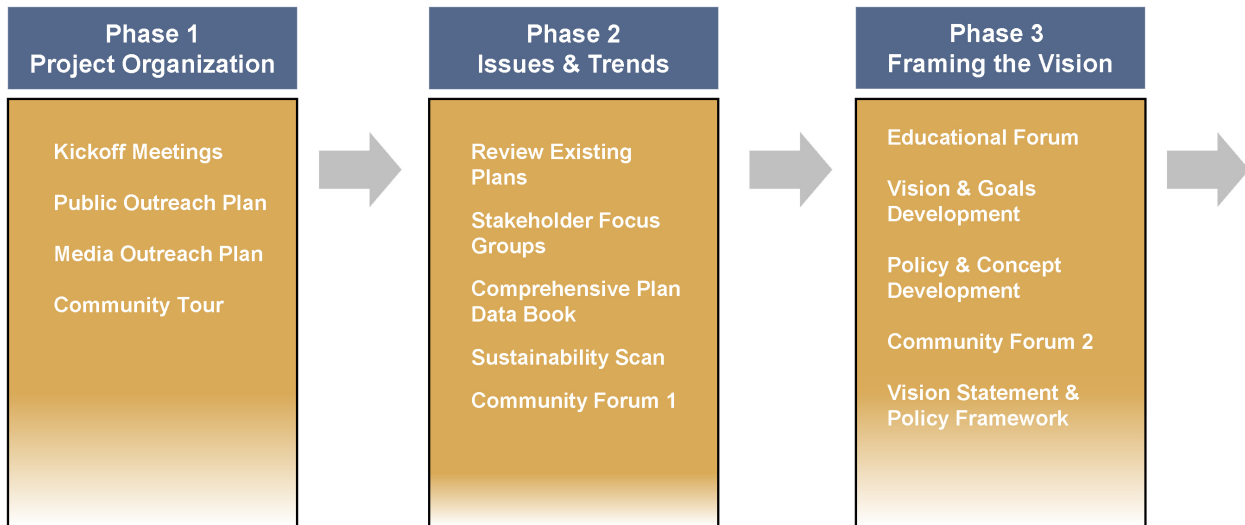
the United States. From the economic perspective, Albany is located in the heart of New York's Capital Region, which encompasses Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady Counties. The Capital Region is in turn part of New York's Tech Valley, which stretches from the Canadian border near Montreal to just north of New York City.

The technology sector is a major contributor to the Capital Region economy, spurred by investments such as the NanoTech Complex at the University at Albany and the semiconductor fabrication plant under construction by Global Foundries in Saratoga County. Albany is the largest of the Capital Region's cities (followed by Schenectady, Troy, and Saratoga Springs), and it is the region's major center for state government, higher education, arts and culture, and health care. It is strategically located overlooking the Hudson Valley midway up the Tech Valley from New York City. According to the Tech Valley Chamber Coalition, the "Tech Valley offers rewarding career and business prospects, world-class educational and research facilities, and a fantastic quality of life" as a place to "Live, Work, and Play" (www.techvalley.org).

The challenge and the opportunity for the City of Albany is to leverage its position within these dynamic regions, along with intrinsic assets such as its natural setting, historic building stock, and the spirit of its people, to reverse the national trend of urban disinvestment over many decades and increase quality of life and economic opportunity for residents. Despite this national trend, Albany has been successful in attracting more than \$6.5 billion in investment over the last two decades, indicating the strength of Albany's market and the commitment of local stakeholders. Albany can build from this significant investment by striving to achieve the community's vision and goals set forth in Albany 2030. Regional cooperation among municipalities and agencies (e.g., the Capital District Transportation Authority, Capital District Transportation Committee, the Center for Economic Growth and Capital District Regional Planning Commission) and participation by Albany in regional initiatives are key to continuing this investment and achieving the goals outlined in the Vision Statement and are the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan's strategies and actions.

While Albany 2030 is the first comprehensive plan in the City's history, numerous neighborhood, district, corridor, and topical plans (e.g., for economic development or transportation improvements) have been prepared over the years. Examples include the Arbor Hill Neighborhood Plan (July 2003), Midtown Colleges and University Plan Report (2005), Park South Urban Renewal Plan (2006), Capital South Plan (2007), Capitalize Albany (1996-2007), Albany SDAT: A Sustainable Capital for the 21st Century (2007), the Albany Bicycle Master Plan (2009), and the Education District Enhancement Study (2011). In accordance with the second major comprehensive plan purpose described above in Section 1.1, the Albany 2030 goals, strategies, and actions incorporate and align directions set by these and other plans and initiatives.

PLANNING PROCESS — STAGE ONE

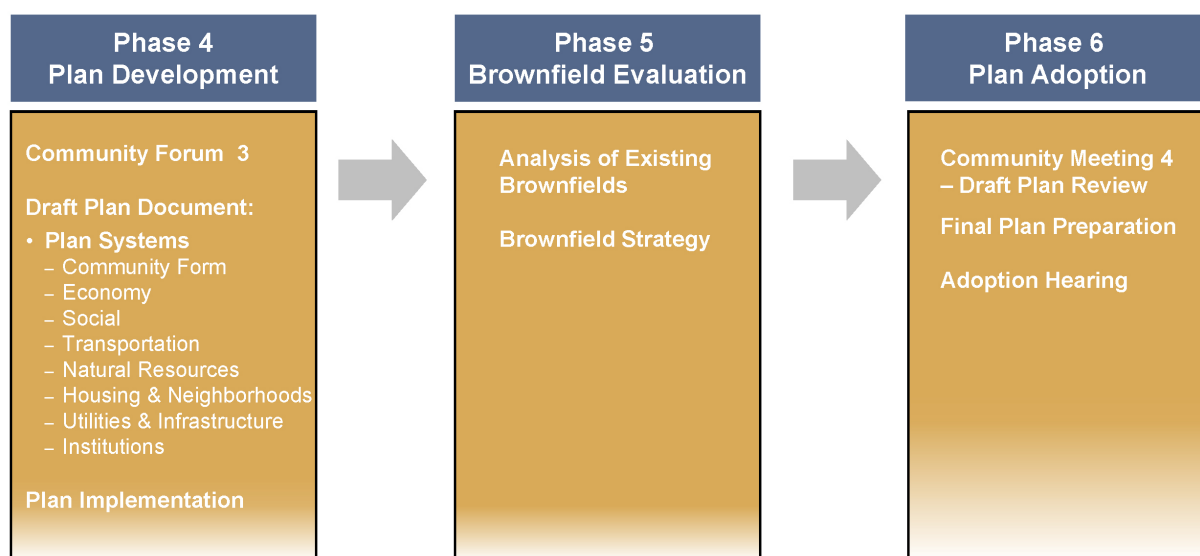


As recent citywide plans, the SDAT report and Capitalize Albany are particularly germane to the Albany 2030 Plan. The SDAT report presents the work of a Sustainable Design Assessment Team sponsored by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) to assist the City and its citizens in addressing key issues facing Albany, framed to inform subsequent development of a comprehensive plan for the City. Recommendations such as addressing the vacant properties in many of the city's neighborhoods, building a more sustainable transportation system, achieving better stewardship of the City's open spaces, and promoting energy efficiency are reflected in the Albany 2030 strategies and actions. Prepared by 49 community stakeholders, the latest report of Capitalize Albany is an economic development strategy that builds on the successes of the original, an economic revitalization vision and strategy prepared in 1996. It addresses opportunities and challenges in three focus areas: Development, Neighborhood Revitalization, and Education. As with the SDAT report, Recapitalize Albany recommendations are integrated throughout the Comprehensive Plan.

1.3 PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW

The process of preparing the first comprehensive plan in Albany's 400-year history began in September 2009. Prior to initiation of the process, a Comprehensive Plan Board consisting of citizens, department heads, business owners and stakeholders was appointed by Common Council to provide direction for development of the plan and to make recommendations regarding its adoption. The process consisted of two stages, Community Assessment and Visioning and development of the full Albany 2030 Plan:

PLANNING PROCESS — STAGE TWO



1. Stage One – Community Assessment and Visioning: This stage of the planning process consisted of three phases. In the first phase, city staff worked with the consultant team¹ to finalize the work program, schedule, and means to engage members of the public and representatives of key stakeholder organizations (governmental agencies, neighborhood groups, environmental and economic development interests, etc.) in the process.

In the second phase, key issues and trends related to Albany's population, economy, and environment were identified through data collection and analysis, review of existing plans and studies, and interviews with a broad range of community stakeholders. These issues and trends are documented in the Comprehensive Plan Data Book.

The third phase of the process involved extensive community outreach to engage thousands of citizens in articulating a vision for Albany's future. This outreach included two series of community forums (three meetings each in different parts of the City); an interactive Albany 2030 website; house parties (at which residents gathered with their friends and neighbors to generate ideas about Albany's future); "stoop" surveys (engaging residents in their own neighborhoods to discuss issues and complete written surveys), and other means of soliciting input. The results provided the basis for preparing an overarching Vision Statement for Albany in the year 2030 (presented in Chapter 2) and an initial set of policy directions to set the framework for development of the full comprehensive plan in Stage 2.

¹ The consultant team was led by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC (WRT) with PlaceMatters (community engagement), Eng-Wong Taub and Associates (transportation), and Economic Stewardship (economics).

2. Stage Two – The Comprehensive Plan: The full Albany 2030 Plan establishes the specific steps to be taken to “change course” by influencing current conditions and trends to achieve the future Albany envisioned by citizens. Stage Two began with a third community forum series, during which citizens reviewed the Vision Statement and policy directions developed in Stage One and identified community priorities for action. City staff and consultants then worked with the Comprehensive Plan Board to translate the community input into:

- **Strategies and actions** for each of the eight plan components (conceived as inter-related “systems” rather than separate “elements” as is typical of the traditional comprehensive plan);
- **Projects** synthesized from the system strategies and actions into a short, intermediate, and long-term program for action to implement the Plan; and
- A **plan monitoring** process to measure progress in implementing and evaluating the Albany 2030 Plan over time.

In addition, Stage Two included an evaluation of existing brownfield areas within Albany, identification of potential brownfield redevelopment sites, and incorporation of a brownfield redevelopment strategy into the Albany 2030 Plan strategies, actions, and implementation projects (see Section 1.5 below).

1.4 PUBLIC OUTREACH

Begun in 2009, the Albany 2030 process was designed to engage all members of the Albany community and regional partners in developing a vision for the city’s future. Over a two-year period, the City solicited public input on existing issues within the city and the community’s aspirations for its short- and long-term futures. Guided by a Comprehensive Plan Board that consisted of a cross-section of community representatives, the Albany 2030 process ensured that the comprehensive plan is a truly collaborative product that reflects innovative planning strategies fitted to Albany’s unique environment and the concerns and values of its community.

Broad and meaningful community engagement is critical to the success of the Albany 2030 plan and a primary goal of the Albany 2030 plan process. To achieve this goal, the City and the plan consultant team developed a detailed framework to guide public outreach. This framework identified a range of ways to go beyond mere plan advertising and involve the community in an interactive, iterative process. All public meetings, focus group interviews, and outreach strategies included the following primary objectives:

- Build understanding of the project and credibility for the process.
- Provide numerous and varied opportunities for public participation and input.
- Understand the needs and interests of the City’s diverse constituency.
- Show a clear connection between input and outcomes.

To achieve these objectives, the City developed an innovative outreach and community engagement approach designed to maximize citizen involvement and to maintain interest and enthusiasm throughout the planning process.

Albany 2030 - A Model Outreach Approach

Effective community outreach involves a multitude of techniques to promote the plan and engage Albany's diverse constituents who have different interests, time commitments, mobility needs, and technological capabilities. The Albany 2030 outreach process involved a variety of techniques designed to solicit ideas and aspirations for Albany's future while keeping the process transparent, inclusive, accessible, and fun:

- **Branding and Promotion**

Branding and promotion is an often overlooked, but extremely important task in the comprehensive planning process. To initiate and capture interest in the comprehensive plan, an identifiable brand was established for the project, including a project logo, a consistent color scheme, and an enthusiastic message.



In addition, a continual and diverse promotional campaign was developed to maintain community excitement and involvement throughout the planning process, including:

- More than 10,000 fun, eye-catching, and engaging fliers/posters circulated throughout the City at atypical locations, including bars, gas stations, bus shelters, buses, senior living centers – fliers were also sent home with school children.
- Opportunities for text-messaging and social media input at promotional events and public forums.
- Public Service Announcements on a variety of local radio stations.
- Links from local websites.
- Stories in local media.
- Presentations to local civic and business groups.
- Listserv announcements to more than 1,000 people.

Principles of the Albany 2030 Public Participation Plan

- Open to All
- Community Engagement
- Transparency
- Engaging Underrepresented Groups
- Enthusiastic, Fun and Vibrant
- Representative
- Diverse Methods

- Community Forums

The City and consultant team held a series of three community forums to provide the opportunity for Albany's citizens to openly discuss their concerns, values and aspirations, and priorities for Albany's future. Each community forum included a series of meetings located in three strategically accessible locations in the City and at different days and times to maximize participation.

The first community forum meeting series was designed to define areas of consensus on the important issues facing the City. The meeting began with a summary presentation of the findings of the data trends analysis and stakeholder interviews to set the context for facilitated citizen discourse. The citizen participants were then asked to organize into facilitated breakout groups to discuss and build consensus on Albany's strengths, weaknesses, and vision for the future. Keypad polling allowed participants to prioritize the issues by voting on the top five strengths, weaknesses, and vision ideas and receive real-time results.



Community Forum 2 was conducted for the purpose of obtaining public input on the Vision Statement and to build consensus on priorities for goals and objectives based on the vision components. The Vision Statement and vision components, described in more detail in Chapter 2, provide the basis for formulating a set of objectives that were used to develop the policy framework and direct priorities for action in the implementation phase of the Comprehensive Plan. Participants in Community Forum 2 used keypad polling to vote on the degree to which they agreed with the Vision Statement and vision components. Participants were then asked to organize into facilitated breakout groups

based on each of the five vision components and generate goals for that component. Each group then picked their top three goals and submitted them to the consultant's technology team for computerized processing.



The third round of community forums focused on prioritizing investment types and conducting a mock budget allocation exercise to ascertain community preferences for development and investment in Albany based on the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan systems. The first exercise included keypad polling on the preferences for various investment types within five categories:

- Neighborhood Investment
- Multi-Modal Transportation Hub
- Neighborhood Commercial Centers
- Regional Centers
- Greenways and Open Space

Participants mapped their top three preferred locations for investment in each category, and these locations were mapped electronically using Google Maps. The map can be found in Appendix B - Public Outreach Summarized Results. The second exercise al-

House Parties

For each of the three Community Forums, the City and consultant team created “House Party” materials that mimicked the exercises conducted in the Forums. These “do-it-yourself” versions of the forums provided intimate gatherings held by residents in their homes, allowing for informal discussion among neighbors.

The House Party materials were available at each forum and on the Albany 2030 website. These materials were also used at some of the small group meetings hosted by the City that were held outside the forums.

lowed participants to allocate \$100 dollars into each of the eight plan systems, entering the amounts into a shared spreadsheet. The average allocation for each system was quickly calculated using keypad polling. Participant groups were then assigned one system and given the average amount allocated to that system to allocate among the sub-system components. The outcomes of the third round of Forums were a prioritization of types of investment and prioritization with relative dollar amounts for each of the comprehensive plan systems.



A brief overview of the Community Forum results is included at the end of this section. More detailed public outreach results are included in Appendix B.

- **Interactive Website and Social Media**

While reaching out to constituents of all ages, abilities, and interests is a key component of the public engagement plan, the City recognizes the importance of incorporating contemporary social media and web technology to capture the interest and participation of young professionals and anyone else who relies on access to instant communication. Incorporation of web technology and social media include the following features:

- The Albany 2030 Interactive Website

The Albany 2030 interactive website provides a comprehensive resource for outreach, feedback, and information sharing. The site has three main areas: Learn, Share, and Participate. The Learn section of the website includes an About section with information about the Albany 2030 process, the consultant team, the Comprehensive Plan Board members, and about comprehensive planning in general. The Participate section in-

cludes a calendar and information on all events, commenting on events, a section to sign up for email updates as well as RSS and SMS feeds [emails (RSS) and text messages (SMS) that are sent when updates to the site are made]. The Share section of the site includes the Citizen Journal, which allows users to upload photos, text, and video describing their opinions about Albany, strengths and challenges, and examples of what they envision for the future. The Share section also includes Online Surveys to provide a quick way of entering feedback during each participation round following the Community Forum themes.

City Staff have been trained on the use of the website content management system so that the City can continue to use the Albany2030.org site for future projects and events.

Albany 2030 and Social Media

Over 500 Facebook “Likes”

Over 390 Twitter Followers



– Social Media

The City set up fully interactive social media sites for the Albany 2030 Plan, including a Facebook page, Twitter account, and LinkedIn group to allow for immediate feedback and to keep a constant open line of communication. The three social media have been used regularly to announce events, send reminders, and launch discussions, allowing the City and consultant team to take the community’s temperature on current issues and Albany 2030 topics. The City also utilized Flickr, Google Docs, SurveyMonkey and Scribd to provide a variety of free and interactive online participation methods.

• Creative Outreach Techniques

To engage citizens with limited access to computer technology and those who do not normally participate in formal meetings, additional outreach techniques were employed, including reaching out to familiar places and venues, such as neighborhood events and festivals, churches, schools, and stoop surveys. Examples of innovative outreach techniques used to maximize community participation and provide a wider platform for discussing Albany 2030 topics include:

– Stakeholder Roundtables

These were held at the beginning and toward the completion of the planning process to engage “experts” with various interests and knowledge of the Albany community to set the project on the right course. Over 100 community representatives, including leaders in banking/lending, real estate development, social services, housing, economic development, education, etc., participated in the discussions.

– Micro-meetings

Dozens of micro-meetings, or scaled-down versions of the Community Forums, were conducted by the City and consultant team to reach targeted groups who have limited access to centralized public meetings. Specifically, the City held meetings with the City Rescue Mission to hear from the homeless population, a first grade class to engage school children, and assisted living facilities to reach out to seniors. Dozens of meetings were held throughout the planning process. Total attendance numbers and socio-demographic characteristics of attendees were not always captured at these meetings.

– Speed Planning

An additional event using a networking mixer format was used to engage young professionals in the planning process. The “Speed Planning” event was based on the “speed dating” concept and allowed participants to have conversations at tables on various topics for about 10 minutes, then move on to the next table. The participants never met with the same group twice. This event, which had 21 attendees, allowed young professionals to meet and have conversations, but also quickly introduced Albany 2030 topics and allowed for input.

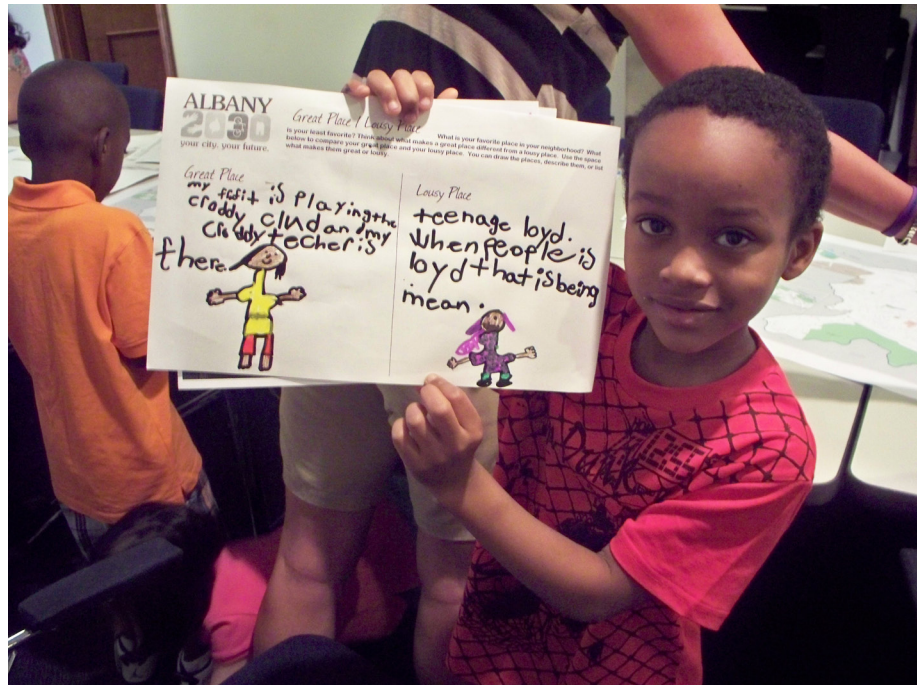
– Stoop Surveys

The most effective method employed for engaging hard-to-reach populations, (i.e., low-income, minority neighborhoods) was the “Stoop Survey” approach. Comprehensive Plan Board members, City Staff, and Consultants conducted the stoop surveys, which involved walking around underrepresented neighborhoods with paper surveys with a modified version of some of the Community Forum questions. The board members surveyed citizens that they encountered on their front stoops or on the sidewalk and used the quick, five minute informal survey to get input on the comprehensive plan issues, ideas, and process. Over 164 citizens were surveyed using this method, which met with support from the citizens and appreciation that they were proactively involved in the process.



During a micro meeting, first-graders designed improvements to vacant lots and abandoned buildings.

A first-grader from a local public elementary school tells us what makes his neighborhood a “great place” and what makes it a “lousy place.”



- Continuing Outreach

The City did not stop the community engagement process with up-front input. A variety of methods were used throughout the planning process to obtain continual validation of the Albany 2030 Vision, including:

- Walk-Shops: used to show how a plan progresses to implementation and to ask participants to submit ideal/not-ideal examples of priorities/projects highlighted in the Plan; YouTube was used to post the Albany 2030 walk-shop routes. More than 50 participants attended this series.
- Community Drop-Ins: on-site opportunities at community hubs like grocery stores to provide input on sections of the Plan. Multiple surveys were completed, and information was distributed to hundreds of passersby.
- Surveys: additional online surveys posted on the Albany 2030 website as well as paper surveys distributed to the community to provide a platform for plan reaction and feedback. Roughly 200 surveys were completed.
- Micro Meetings: participation in neighborhood and stakeholder meetings to gain feedback on the Comprehensive Plan. Nineteen meetings were attended by roughly 250 people.
- Final Town Hall Forum: final centralized public meeting for input on the full comprehensive plan.

Overview of Public Participation Outcomes

Specific results for the exercises and questions raised through the various public outreach techniques used throughout the Albany 2030 process are included in Appendix B. The following figures provide a brief overview and snapshot from four of the outreach methods (community forums, supplemental community meetings, stoop surveys, speed planning) of how many people responded and who was represented in the community engagement process.

Dozens of other neighborhood association, community organization and stakeholder group meetings were also held. These did not collect socio-demographic information. Efforts were made to hold these meetings in neighborhoods throughout the City and with organizations/stakeholders representing typically underserved populations. The hundreds of individuals in attendance at these meetings are not captured in the tables below.

- [Community Forums and Supplemental Meetings](#)

690 Total Participants

Demographic	% of Total Participants	2000 Census % of Population
African American	28%	28.1%
Hispanic	2%	5.6%
Asian	1%	3.3%
White	57%	63.1%
Mixed / Other	7%	5.2%
Not Answered	5%	
Age 0 - 19	5%	26%
Age 20 - 34	27%	29.1%
Age 35 - 54	38%	24.7%
Age 55 +	29%	20.1%

- Stoop Surveys

164 Total Participants

Demographic	% of Total Participants	2000 Census % of Population
African American	59%	28.1%
Hispanic	2%	5.6%
Asian	0%	3.3%
White	18%	63.1%
Mixed / Other	8%	5.2%
Not Answered	11%	
Age 15-19	8%	9.2%
Age 20-34	28%	29.1%
Age 35-54	18%	24.7%
Age 55+	17%	20.1%
Not Answered	29%	

- Speed Planning

21 Total Participants

Demographic	% of Total Participants	2000 Census % of Population
African American	0%	28.1%
Hispanic	5%	5.6%
Asian	0%	3.3%
White	81%	63.1%
Mixed / Other	14%	5.2%
Age 15-19	0%	9.2%
Age 20-34	52%	29.1%
Age 35-54	43%	24.7%
Age 55+	5%	20.1%
Age 55+	17%	20.1%
Not Answered	29%	

As indicated in the above tables, the snapshot results of the public outreach events show that the Albany 2030 process has representative participation comparable to the demographic composition of the City of Albany population as a whole. The extensive community outreach process used for the Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan can be viewed as a model approach for inclusive and transparent community engagement.

1.5 SYSTEMS APPROACH

Following the direction set by enabling legislation in New York and other states, traditional comprehensive plans are typically organized into separate elements that address discrete planning topics (land use, transportation, economic development, etc.). This approach tends to consider issues and develop solutions in isolation, as opposed to accounting for interrelationships between elements or capitalizing on the synergies that can be created by working across elements. **Systems thinking** is a fundamentally different approach that focuses on how constituent parts (such as the comprehensive plan elements) interact with other parts to produce the behavior of a system as a whole. While commonly used by businesses and other organizations to achieve outcomes such as reduced waste and increased profits, systems thinking has rarely been applied to cities, in part because of their complexity. However, the basic notions of systems thinking are well suited to comprehensive planning, both to overcome the limitations of the “silo” approach of discrete plan elements and to help decision-makers prioritize strategies and actions for implementation based on effectiveness in influencing system behavior in the desired direction, or in other words, leveraging limited resources to accomplish more with less.

A system is a set of elements or parts that is coherently organized and interconnected in a pattern or structure that produces a characteristic set of behaviors, often referred to as its “function” or “purpose.”

Donella Meadows, *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*

The Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan uses a systems approach to develop the overarching direction set by citizens (expressed in the Vision Statement) into strategies and actions for eight plan systems (Chapter 3) and priorities for implementation (Chapter 4). This approach begins with three guiding concepts:

- The City of Albany is a system that operates within a hierarchy of systems at larger (region, state, national, globe) and smaller (neighborhood, site) scales.
- The components of the Comprehensive Plan are interdependent systems that are defined by their functions, comprised of related sub-systems, and interact at different scales, influencing how Albany performs as a system.
- Plan strategies, actions, and implementation projects should be designed to optimize and align the performance of the systems in achieving the Albany 2030 Vision.

Five **system principles** were developed to inform development of the full Comprehensive Plan in Stage Two of the planning process. These principles are:

Leverage Point – a place where intervention can most effectively bring about change throughout the system, i.e., a strategy or action which promotes the highest level of systemic change.

1. Target **interconnections (overlaps and leverage points)** between components to influence system behavior in the desired direction.
2. Build **feedback loops** that generate momentum for positive change.
3. Increase system **resilience**.
4. Create **synergies** between **different levels** of the system hierarchy.
5. Use an **adaptive management** process to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

1. Target **interconnections (overlaps and leverage points)** between components to influence the system behavior in the desired direction.

Overlaps are interrelationships between different plan systems (e.g., community form and transportation strategies that promote compact, walkable development and alternatives to auto use). However, merely addressing overlaps is not sufficient to bring about the deeper systemic change needed to change Albany's trajectory towards the Vision Statement. A **leverage point** is a place where intervention can most effectively bring about change throughout the system. In Albany, the leverage points relate to four "keys" to achieving the Albany 2030 Vision. These keys were developed by analyzing and synthesizing input received from the public and community stakeholders, as well as data on existing conditions and trends, to identify what must be accomplished to bring about the deeper systemic changes needed if the Albany citizens envision in the year 2030 is to be realized:

- Improve Albany's image in the region and beyond in concert with improving quality of life for residents
- Increase the fiscal capacity of the City
- Facilitate and mobilize private investment within Albany
- Establish Albany's reputation and leadership as a Green Community

Overlaps and leverage points were a primary mechanism used to identify priorities for comprehensive plan implementation (presented in Chapter 4).

2. Build **feedback loops** that generate momentum for positive change.

A feedback loop is a circular (as opposed to linear) pathway of cause and effect in which an effect triggered by the behavior of a system returns to its cause and generates either more or less of the same effect. A negative (or regulating) feedback loop maintains the behavior of the system within a certain range over time, for example: how a thermostat controls a heater to keep the indoor temperature within a comfortable range during cold weather. A positive (or reinforcing) feedback loop tends to amplify system behavior or change in a certain direction (i.e., a "snowball" effect). For example, scientists project that global climate change could trigger positive feedback loops in nature that amplify warming trends and impacts such as sea level rise.

The feedback loop principle can be applied in comprehensive plan strategies and actions that maintain the stability of valued system components such as strong neighborhoods (negative feedback loops) or create change by counteracting entrenched patterns of resistance with the system (positive feedback loops). An example of the latter is the use of public “seed” investment to attract private investment to a targeted revitalization area, in turn generating momentum for additional private investment.

3. Increase system resilience.

A hallmark of successful communities, resilience is the ability to recover from or adapt to disturbance or change. For example, a community that controls development in flood-prone areas and establishes emergency management procedures (e.g., safe evacuation routes) in anticipation of natural disasters will suffer less damage and recover more quickly than one that does not should a hurricane or other such disaster strike. Characteristics of resilient communities include diversity, reliance on local resources, “tight” feedback loops (i.e., monitor to prevent crossing a threshold or “tipping point” that triggers undesirable positive feedback loop), capacity to respond effectively to change, and innovation². Examples of plan strategies to increase resilience include:

- Improving the mix of industries, jobs, and worker skill levels (diversity)
- Reducing dependence on imported fossil fuels through energy conservation and development of renewable sources (reliance on local resources)

4. Create synergies between different levels of the system hierarchy.

Related directly to the first guiding concept above, this principle calls for connecting different system levels in order to produce greater benefits than would be achieved if a single level were addressed in isolation. One example is trail or transit development that connects to a regional transportation system, thus attracting more users and providing greater mobility for residents than if the trails or routes were confined to city limits. Another is creating connections among different levels of government (local, regional, and state) in order to build capacity for implementation.

5. Use an adaptive management process to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

Adaptive management is an iterative process of improving management practices and decision-making by learning from the outcomes of previous practices and decisions. This approach is well suited to dealing with the uncertainty of change by tracking the performance of key system attributes over time and adjusting practices, decisions, and actions accordingly. For the Comprehensive Plan, this means using a monitoring program comprised of benchmarks and indicators to assess progress in implementing the plan. The results will provide a systematic basis for making needed “corrections” to action programs as implementation moves forward.

² Adapted from Brian Walker and David Salt, *Resilience Thinking: Sustaining Ecosystems and People in a Changing World*, Island Press, 2006, pp. 145-148

1.6 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANNING INITIATIVES

While Albany 2030 is the City's first comprehensive planning process, the City has undertaken and implemented numerous neighborhood and topical planning initiatives. Rather than override or duplicate these efforts, the Albany 2030 plan draws themes and recommendations from these plans into a broader citywide context. The City's previous plans have been reviewed and incorporated into the goals, actions, strategies and projects listed throughout the Albany 2030 Plan.

Development of the comprehensive plan has been coordinated with two concurrent planning initiatives by the City of Albany:

- Brownfield Opportunity Areas Pre-Nomination Study
- Climate Action Plan

As summarized below, these planning initiatives are consistent with the vision and goals for the City's future established by the Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan. They set more specific direction for action related to strategies, actions, and implementation projects contained in the Plan. More information on these initiatives is provided in the appendices.

Brownfield Opportunity Areas Pre-Nomination Study

Administered by the NYS Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program³ is designed to help communities foster redevelopment by returning dormant and blighted land into productive and catalytic uses while restoring environmental quality³. The BOA program takes a comprehensive, area-wide approach to revitalization through brownfield development (as opposed to focusing on individual properties). It encompasses three steps:

1. **Step One:** A Pre-Nomination Study involves the selection of a potential redevelopment area for further study based on an initial reconnaissance of brownfield sites and other pertinent conditions within an area.
2. **Step Two:** The Nomination Study is the second step of the BOA process. This step involves a more intensive study of a potential brownfield redevelopment area (or areas) identified in Step One, including: inventory and evaluation of data and trends affecting the area's redevelopment potential; economic and market analysis; identification of strategic sites for redevelopment; and formulation of recommendations to move redevelopment of the strategic sites forward within the framework of a Master Plan.
3. **Step Three:** The final step of the BOA program is to develop an Implementation Strategy identifying the specific actions to be taken to implement the Master Plan recommendations for redevelopment of the strategic sites.

³ A brownfield is an industrial or commercial property that is abandoned or underused and suffers from "real or perceived" environmental contamination from its former use.

As an older city, Albany has a number of potential brownfield sites. Redevelopment of these sites can have a catalytic effect in Albany's revitalization by generating momentum and mobilizing private investment (one of the four keys to achieving the Albany 2030 Vision). Preparation of a BOA Pre-Nomination Study (Step One) for the entire city has been integrated into the Albany 2030 planning process. This study identifies clusters of brownfield and underutilized lands that can be advanced through subsequent steps of the BOA process. The plan system chapters incorporate strategies to promote brownfield redevelopment, thus setting the framework for more detailed analysis of smaller geographic areas within the City and identification of strategic sites in a future BOA Nomination Study.

In the Systems Interrelationships Matrix on page 192, the icon depicted here will indicate specific brownfield-related strategies.



Climate Action Plan

In 2007, the world's foremost authority on climate change, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), declared that the "warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising global average sea level" and that "human influence is very likely the leading cause of global warming." The Climate Action Plan, Appendix D, provides additional information and resources related to the projected climate-related impacts that the City of Albany faces.

The Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability was established in 2010 to coordinate actions to mitigate Albany's effects on climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions in municipal government operations and the City as a whole. In addition, the City is developing strategies to adapt to the anticipated effects of climate change. In upstate New York, these effects are projected to include increased average temperatures, precipitation, and frequency and severity of storms. Specific actions being taken include:

- Compiling a greenhouse gas inventory for Albany (documenting energy use and greenhouse gas emissions from municipal government, transportation and residential, commercial and industrial sectors).
- Conducting comprehensive energy audits and undertaking energy-related improvements to improve the energy efficiency of municipal buildings and facilities.
- Setting a target for reducing the city's greenhouse gas emissions.
- Developing climate action and adaptation plans.

Beginning with the citizen-driven Vision Statement, many of the components of the Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan are designed with energy and sustainability in mind. Initiatives such as building a multimodal transportation center, creating walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods, and revitalizing Albany's downtown all have potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create a more sustainable city. Comprehensive Plan development has been closely coordinated with development of the Climate Action Plan.

In fact, to ensure consistency between the plans, the Albany 2030 strategies and actions serve as the foundation for the development of the Climate Action Plan (CAP). As a part of the public engagement process, actions and strategies were identified that have direct relationships to climate mitigation and adaptation and were synthesized and elaborated upon in the Climate Action Plan. In addition, a Community Advisory Committee on Sustainability (CAC) was created to help guide CAP development as well as oversee a series of community "Climate Conversations" to solicit input on the CAP. The overall result of the process is a versatile climate document that will be reviewed annually and that will enable the City to track its progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing community resiliency.

It is important to note that the City is currently developing, with funding from the New York State Department of State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, a formal Climate Adaptation Plan that will include a vulnerability assessment and identify and address projected local impacts and responses to climate change. Examples of issues that will be addressed include identifying areas with increased risk to flooding, potential impacts to infrastructure, identification of vulnerable populations, and potential responses in terms of development requirements, insurance vulnerabilities and emergency services.



In the Systems Interrelationships Matrix on page 192, the icon depicted here will indicate specific climate action strategies.



CHAPTER 2.0

2.0 Vision Statement

The Vision Statement defines the place that citizens want Albany to be in the future. It provides the mandate for action to implement the Comprehensive Plan, guidance for planning decisions, and the overall benchmark against which implementation progress will be measured. The Vision Statement directly reflects extensive public input received during Stage One (Community Assessment and Visioning) of the planning process. The City and consultant team hosted two series of community forums (three meetings each in different parts of the City) to provide citizens with the opportunity to openly discuss concerns, community values, and aspirations for Albany's future. Held in January 2010, Community Forum Series #1 was designed to define areas of citizen consensus on the important issues facing the City. The meetings began with a summary presentation of the findings of the data, trends, and issues analysis to set the context for discussion. Citizen participants then broke into facilitated groups to discuss and build consensus on Albany's strengths, weaknesses, and ideas for the future. Keypad polling was used to allow participants to prioritize issues by voting on the top five strengths, weaknesses, and vision ideas.

The results of Community Forum Series #1 and associated outreach activities (an interactive website, "house parties," stakeholder interviews, etc.) were used to create a draft Vision Statement comprised of six components directly reflecting the input received. Community Forum Series #2 was conducted in April 2010 to allow citizens to review and give feedback on the draft. Participants again used keypad polling to indicate the degree to which they agreed with the draft Vision Statement. Eighty-one percent of the participants either agreed somewhat (45%) or strongly agreed (36%) with the Vision Statement. Participants were also provided the opportunity to recommend any proposed changes to the wording of the draft. The final Vision Statement (presented below) incorporates public comments from Community Forum Series #2 as well as input received via the Albany 2030 website. Based on the input, one of the five components of the draft (Sustainable City/Prosperous Economy) was divided into two components of the final Vision Statement (Green City and Prosperous Economy).

In considering the Vision Statement, it is important to understand its perspective, context, and role in the Comprehensive Plan. The Vision Statement expresses citizens' aspirations for the future of Albany in the year 2030. Because it describes the future as citizens choose it to be, it is written from the perspective of a future Albany resident observing the City in 2030 and reflecting on the past two decades of progress – progress guided by the goals, strategies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan, as maintained and updated over time. The Vision Statement expresses citizens' collective values and motivations – **what we intend Albany to be** – while Chapters 3 (Comprehensive Plan Systems) and 4 (Implementation) lay out in detail what **we must do to achieve the vision**.

2.1 THE VISION OF ALBANY IN 2030

Albany in 2030 has built on its history and diverse natural, cultural, institutional, and human resources to become a global model for sustainable revitalization and urban livability. The City promotes a balanced approach to economic opportunity, social equity, and environmental quality that is locally driven, encourages citizen involvement and investment, and benefits all residents.

2.2 THE VISION COMPONENTS

1. Safe, Livable Neighborhoods

Every neighborhood in Albany is a desirable place to live because of its walkable streets, historic architecture, range of housing choices, mixed-use neighborhood centers, quality schools, parks and recreation facilities, and easy access to Downtown Albany and other job centers.

2. Model Educational System

Albany nurtures its most valuable resources, its children, by promoting excellence in education at all levels. The City's institutions of higher education are valued resources and partners in initiatives to expand economic opportunities, enhance work force skills, and promote lifelong learning.

3. Vibrant Urban Center

As the capital of New York and a destination for work, play, and tourism, Albany is the region's primary center of government, education, health care, employment, and the arts. Downtown Albany is a vibrant mix of business, residential, educational, cultural, and entertainment uses connected to the Hudson River waterfront.

4. Multi-Modal Transportation Hub

Albany's neighborhoods and centers are connected to each other and to the rest of the region by an extensive, efficient, and safe network of complete streets, mass transit, bikeways, trails, and sidewalks.

5. Green City

Albany is a model of community health and sustainability in its planning, restorative development, and conservation of energy, water, and natural resources.

6. Prosperous Economy

The City is a pillar of the regional and global economies, providing good employment opportunities for all residents with a focus on green jobs and technology.



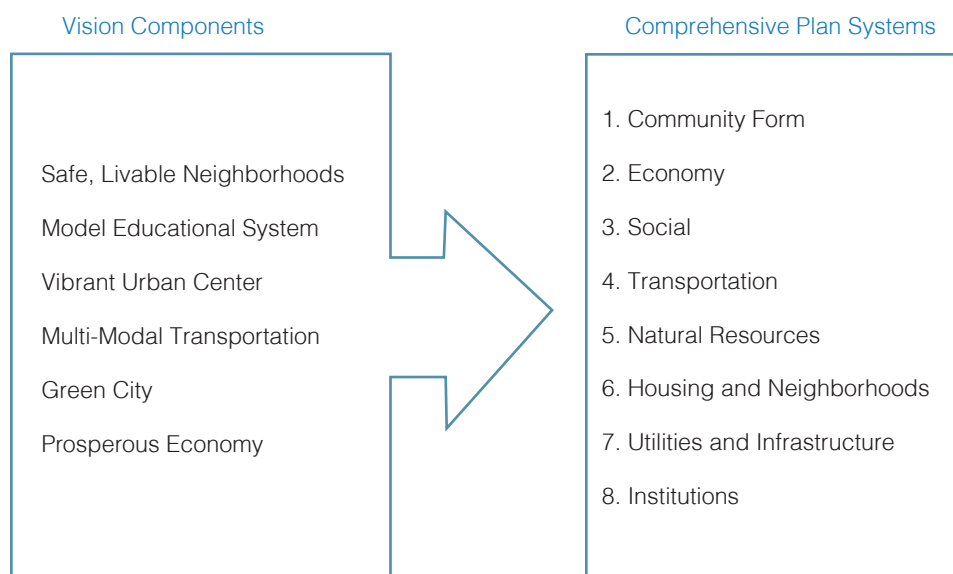


CHAPTER 3.0

3.0 Sustainability Building Blocks: The Comprehensive Plan Systems

This chapter lays out detailed strategies and actions designed to set Albany on the path of achieving the sustainable future city described by the Albany 2030 Vision Statement. These strategies and actions are organized into eight interdependent systems defined by their subject area/function:

In Community Forum #2, participants were asked to build consensus on priorities for goals and objectives based on the Vision Statement and vision components by generating goals for each component and picking their top three goals (detailed results available in Appendix B). The summary of the prioritized goals were synthesized and used as the basis for developing strategic directions for guiding positive change as it pertains to each of the six vision components. This step establishes a bridge to the strategies and actions outlined in Section 3: Sustainability Building Blocks, which ties together the comprehensive plan vision components into a series of eight interrelated systems with sustainability as an overarching direction.



Each system is comprised of a series of components, or sub-systems. The sub-systems for community form, for example, are land use patterns, urban design, and architectural character. How these systems and sub-systems function and interact with other systems and sub-systems largely determines the performance of Albany as a whole system. To help understand the interrelationships between systems and to inform development of the implementation projects and priorities presented in Chapter 4, strategies that link across systems are identified as “interrelated strategies” and are hyperlinked throughout the document.

Introduction
Vision Statement

Sustainability Building Blocks: The Comprehensive Plan System

Plan Implementation





Community form addresses the determinants of the physical form and appearance of the City. Albany's community form is a result of the interaction of the built and natural environments over centuries of human settlement and use. Its foundation is Albany's natural landscape: the west bank of the Hudson River, tributaries such as Patroon Creek and Normans Kill that dissect the landscape, and associated topography and soils. Influences that have altered the landscape over time include development of movement systems such as streets; building for residential, commercial, and institutional purposes; and other ways humans have used the land (e.g., for public spaces and parks). While Albany's physical appearance continues to change and evolve, its historic pattern of buildings and streets remains a defining characteristic of its community form and is a source of pride and identity for residents.

The Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail running through Albany's Corning Preserve is part of the state-wide Canalway Trail that follows the Erie Canal from Buffalo to Albany.

Community Form

Economy
 Social
 Transportation
 Natural Resources
 Housing and Neighborhoods
 Utilities and Infrastructure
 Institutions
 Systems Interrelationships



3.1 Community Form

The key components of Albany's community form system are land use patterns, urban design, and architectural character.

Community form addresses the determinants of the physical form and appearance of the City. Albany's community form is a result of the interaction of the built and natural environments over centuries of human settlement and use. Its foundation is Albany's natural landscape: the west bank of the Hudson River, tributaries such as Patroon Creek and Normans Kill that dissect the landscape, and associated topography and soils. Influences that have altered the landscape over time include development of movement systems such as streets; building for residential, commercial, and institutional purposes; and other ways humans have used the land (e.g., for public spaces and parks). While Albany's physical appearance continues to change and evolve, its historic pattern of buildings and streets remains a defining characteristic of its community form and is a source of pride and identity for residents.

LAND USE PATTERN

Albany's land use pattern refers to the spatial distribution across the City of the ways residents, businesses, institutions, and others use the land. The broad categories of use that make up this pattern include residential, commercial, industrial, mixed-use, institutional, infrastructure (e.g., transportation facilities), and recreation and open space.

Goal:

Promote development of a balanced future land use pattern that supports realization of the Albany 2030 Vision Statement (safe, livable neighborhoods; a model educational system; a vibrant urban center; multi-modal transportation; a green city; and a prosperous economy).

Strategies and Actions:

- LU-1 Use the Land Use Framework Map to guide land use decisions.
- LU-2 Land-use transportation connection.
- LU-3 Vacant and abandoned properties reuse.
- LU-4 Remediate brownfields to restore vacant, contaminated properties.

Community Form Key Issues

- Vacant and abandoned properties in the City impact adjacent property values and contribute to overall neighborhood blight.
- The City's zoning ordinance does not adequately address design guidelines for new development or redevelopment.
- The waterfront is disconnected from the downtown core and neighborhoods.
- Existing land development and building codes do not encourage adaptive reuse of existing structures.
- The City's existing land use GIS data needs to be updated for accuracy and more detailed land use information.

LU-1 Strategy: Use the Land Use Framework Map (see Map 1) as a guide for policy, decision-making, and action. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-2, UD-1, UD-2, UD-3; Economy INV-1, INV-2; Social CHR-2; Transportation MM-1, MM-2, TR-2; Natural Resources WW-3, NH-2; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-2, HDC-6, HDC-8, NS-1, NS-2; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3)

Actions:

- a. Update the City's existing land use data for use in Comprehensive Plan implementation. The City's GIS parcel layer has incomplete land use data for some parcels. The data should be updated to provide the most accurate and current depiction of existing land use.
- b. Revise the zoning ordinance and map to be consistent with the land use framework map and related strategies and actions. This may include creation of new zoning or overlay districts, density evaluation and adjustment to bring about desired community vision, elimination of existing zoning districts that are obsolete or ineffective, and re-zoning of areas of the City to existing or new districts. Form-based codes should be considered.
- c. Establish criteria to guide land use decision-making (e.g., fiscal costs/benefits and impacts on the tax base; coordination with transportation investments; provision of needed neighborhood services).
- d. The land use map should take into account changing land patterns due to climate change (i.e. updated FEMA maps, waterfront areas, areas prone to flooding).
- e. Assess areas vulnerable to climate change and incentive development away from flood plains and other vulnerable areas.

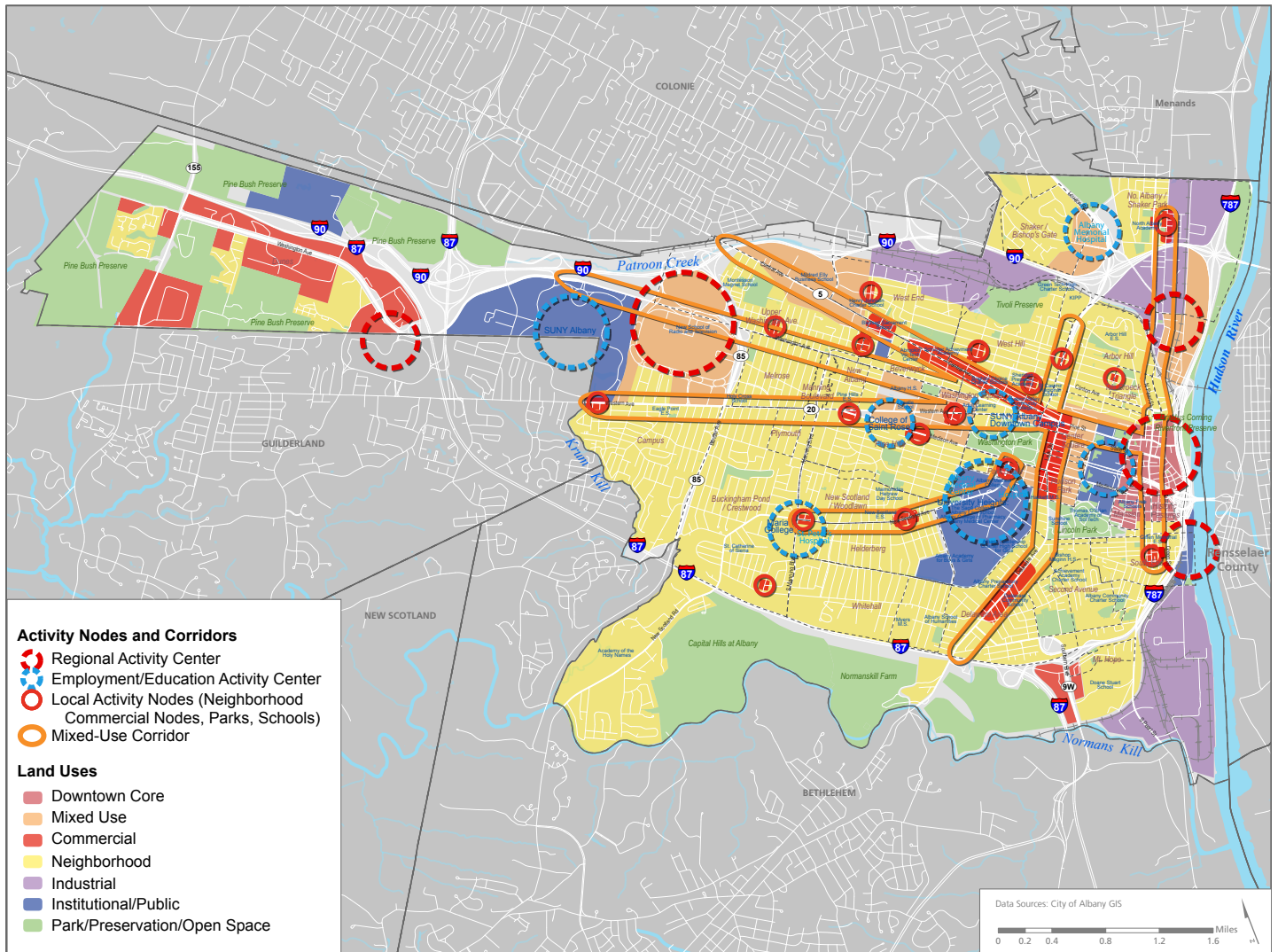
LU-2 Strategy: Land-use transportation connection

Connect land use patterns and the transportation network to maximize transportation efficiency and reduce automobile dependency (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-1, UD-1, UD-3; Economy INV-1; Social CHR-5; Transportation MM-2, TR-2; Natural Resources AQ-1; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-2, NS-2; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3; Institutions RP-2)

- a. Use zoning to promote mixed use development in neighborhood commercial centers, the downtown, and along transit corridors.
- b. Prioritize land use investments (i.e., vacant and abandoned properties acquisition and redevelopment) along transit corridors.

- Economy
- Social
- Transportation
- Natural Resources
- Housing and Neighborhoods
- Utilities and Infrastructure
- Institutions
- Systems Interrelationships

Map 1 Land Use Framework



The Land Use Framework Map (Map 1) provides a generalized representation of the city's vision as expressed through the general land use patterns and activity nodes and centers. As illustrated on Figure 2-1, these nodes and centers are described as follows:

Regional Activity Centers: The major urban hubs that draw residents and visitors from throughout the region and beyond. These typically include a mix of residential, commercial, employment, recreational, or entertainment uses, such as Downtown and the Hudson River waterfront.

Employment/Education Activity Centers: These centers have the highest concentrations of higher education and employment that attract students and employees from across the region. Examples include the NY State office complex, the medical complex, and SUNY.

Local Activity Nodes: These are highly walkable nodes of activity that draw residents from surrounding neighborhoods, including community-serving retail, parks, neighborhood schools, and libraries.

Mixed-Use Corridors: Highly walkable, mixed-use development that extends along a linear corridor. These corridors support transit, bicycles, and pedestrians as well as higher density, mixed-use development.

This map is intended for use as a guide for more detailed planning and Implementation efforts.

BEST PRACTICES: BALTIMORE, MD STRATEGIES FOR REUSE OF VACANT BUILDINGS

As a result of decades of population decline and industrial job loss, there are nearly 16,000 vacant and boarded up buildings in the City of Baltimore. The City's "From Vacant to Value" program encourages the redevelopment of targeted properties and buildings. Using GIS, Baltimore divided vacancies by location: without development demand (65%); with development demand (31%); and emerging markets (4%). Strategies to reduce vacancy include: 1) streamline the disposition process; 2) streamline code enforcement (for properties on transitional blocks); 3) facilitate investment in emerging markets near areas of strengths; 4) offer targeted incentives for homebuyers; 5) support large-scale development in distressed areas with little market demand; 6) maintain, clear, hold, and identify non-housing units in distressed areas (includes demolition, land banking, and marketing to create long-term value). Using these strategies, Baltimore is in the process of consolidating city departments, increasing access to auctions, and reducing further blight in stable and transitional areas.

http://static.baltimorehousing.org/pdf/vacants_to_value.pdf

In 2006, the U.S. Conference of Mayors completed a study: "Combating Problems of Vacant and Abandoned Properties" which summarizes best practices in 27 cities.

www.usmayors.org/bestpractices/vacantproperties06.pdf

LU-3 Strategy: Vacant and abandoned properties reuse

Gain control of vacant and abandoned properties to implement the land use framework. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form ARCH-2; Social PS-1, AC-6; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-9, NI-1)

Actions:

- a. Prioritize vacant and abandoned property acquisition and redevelopment to implement the land use framework and connect land use and transportation networks. In addition to the assessment criteria outlined in the City's Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Plan, the following criteria should be prioritized:
 - A critical mass of properties located in neighborhoods with excessive vacant and abandoned properties that are experiencing public and/or private reinvestment.
 - Properties located along existing and proposed transit routes.
 - Properties located in neighborhood commercial areas identified on the land use framework map.
 - Properties located in regional destination areas as identified on the land use framework map (downtown, waterfront).
- b. Target priority properties as outlined in existing City of Albany vacant and abandoned property strategy reports.

LU-4 Strategy: Remediate brownfields to restore vacant, contaminated properties

Pursue brownfields and land recycling programs to restore properties to the highest and best land use. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form ARCH-3; Natural Resources WW-4, TS-2)

Actions:

- a. Complete a Pre-Nomination Study under the New York State Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) program to inventory potential brownfield redevelopment sites throughout the City, in coordination with the land use framework map (Strategy LU-1) above.⁴

⁴ The City has received grant funding from the New York State Department of State to prepare the Pre-Nomination Study in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan. This funding is being used to develop a brownfield assessment (see Appendix A) that identifies and prioritizes potential brownfields sites for redevelopment.

BEST PRACTICES: OMAHA, NE URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES AND ROANOKE, VA RESIDENTIAL PATTERN BOOK

Omaha developed a set of design guidelines for its eight urban design overlay districts. While most of the guidelines apply to commercial areas throughout the City, there are specific sections where the standards differ. In addition, the guidelines provide photos to illustrate the intent and desired result of each of the standards.

http://www.cityofomaha.org/planning/urbanplanning/images/stories/UD_pdfs/Urban%20Design%20Handbook%20V1.1.pdf

In 2008, Roanoke, Virginia adopted a residential pattern book to preserve and enhance the character and quality of its residential neighborhoods. It serves as an aid for new construction and renovation of existing buildings. The pattern book provides a dictionary of architectural styles found in different neighborhoods (e.g., downtown, suburban areas) and illustrates the characteristics of each housing type. Recommendations for appropriate renovations, materials, paint colors, new construction and additions, landscape, and “green buildings” practices that will improve and maintain the character of each neighborhood are included.

<http://www.roanokeva.gov/>

- b. Use the results of the Pre-Nomination Study to move key clusters of brownfield and underutilized lands through subsequent stages of the BOA process (Step Two – Nomination, Step Three – Implementation Strategy), with the objective of redeveloping targeted sites for productive uses.

URBAN DESIGN

Albany’s urban design character is defined by the arrangement, appearance, functionality and interconnections of its buildings, street and sidewalk network, and public spaces.

Goal:

Promote development patterns that include walkable streets, compact, mixed use development, public spaces, and context sensitivity to historic design and development.

Strategies and Actions:

UD-1 Create design guidelines and a design review process.

UD-2 Improve waterfront and downtown connections.

UD-3 Create multi-modal design guidelines.

UD-1 Strategy: Create design guidelines and a design review process.

Use zoning and development guidelines as a tool to create incentives for achieving desired development patterns. The City currently has a Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) overlay district that provides limited design direction only to specified residential districts and to all neighborhood commercial districts. This tool should be revised and expanded citywide with context-specific guidelines. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form UD-3; Transportation MM-2, TR-2; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-8, NI-2, NS-2; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3, SW-4)

Action:

- a. Apply additional design standards in areas not included in the TND overlay or within a historic district, such as the Harriman Campus development opportunity site and the waterfront districts. Standards will need to be tailored to the unique areas and should be flexible and based on context sensitivity.
- b. Create Transit Oriented Development (TOD) overlay districts along existing and proposed transit corridors to encourage mixed use development with higher densities, reduced parking, and walkable streets. Work with community stakeholders to determine the appropriate density levels and mix of uses as well as appropriate locations for TOD.

Albany has changed dramatically over time, most notably with the evolution of the Empire State Plaza site. Albany 2030 will ensure that ongoing development will make sense for the City's future.

Image | Evan Wolff, Parsons The New School for Design, School of Constructed Environments, 3rd Year Master of Architecture Student



- c. Develop a design guidelines manual including pattern books for each City neighborhood, or other appropriate contextual breakdown, and include community input regarding design quality. Use existing neighborhood plans and conduct visual preference sessions with community stakeholders to confirm design preferences. Design guidelines should be paired with development incentives.
- d. Create development incentives to influence the use and application of the design guidelines manual. Incentives need to be tailored for specific locations and markets and must be considered only after considerable community dialogue, and dialogue specifically with developers, about what would be effective. Incentives may include the following:
 - Density, height, and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) bonuses, depending on the district and neighborhood agreement on density limits
 - Parking reductions based on availability of on-street parking and transit
 - Mix of uses based on neighborhood input
 - Permit and fee waivers, depending on the intensity of development
 - Fast track permitting depending on the intensity, type and location of development
- e. Create a Design Review Board to review projects for consistency with comprehensive plan goals, design guidelines and context sensitivity. The Design Review Board can be an advisory board that makes recommendations to appropriate boards, councils and commissions on development proposals that meet designated thresholds. The Design Review Board may consist of elected officials, City staff, a professional architect, and a historic preservationist.

UD-2 Strategy: Improve waterfront and downtown connections.

Improve connections between the downtown and the Hudson River waterfront and provide waterfront amenities. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-2; Transportation MM-2; Natural Resources WW-5)

Actions:

- a. Update the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) to address access to the waterfront from downtown and adjacent neighborhoods⁵. Key components of the updated plan should include:
 - Conceptual land use and development plans for key sites along the waterfront.
 - Potential long term approach for removing or spanning portions of I-787 to allow for direct pedestrian and vehicular connections to the waterfront.
 - Short term access improvements at key locations between downtown and the waterfront, such as Corning Preserve and Riverfront Park.
 - Improved transit connections to the waterfront, including water-based modes.
 - Plan for development activity, such as new housing, restaurants, and water recreation in key locations that will bring more activity to the waterfront, including negotiations with New York State.
 - Plan for the potential impacts of climate change, including the rise of the Hudson River, particularly during extreme storm events.

UD-3 Strategy: Create multi-modal design guidelines.

Use urban design standards and guidelines as a way to support alternative modes of transportation (pedestrian, bicycle, transit and alternative fuel vehicles). (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-2, UD-1; Economy INV-1; Social CHR-2, PS-2, Transportation MM-1, MM-2, TR-1, VEH-4; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3)

Actions:

- a. Allow for mixed-use, compact development to minimize distances and accommodate walking, biking, and transit connections between neighborhoods, jobs, school, and commercial activity.
- b. Require build-to lines, which are flexible based on scalable indicators such as building height, right-of-way and sidewalk width, along transit corridors, downtown, in neighborhood commercial areas, the waterfront, and other areas as appropriate to enhance the pedestrian experience.

⁵The City has received grant funding from the New York State Department of State to update the LWRP in coordination with the Comprehensive Plan.

- c. Require parking to be located behind or to the side of buildings where feasible to enhance the pedestrian experience. Where it is not feasible to locate parking behind buildings, require decorative screening.
- d. Require alternative transportation amenities and parking (e.g. bike racks, shower and changing facilities, bike lockers, bus shelters, crosswalks) for projects that meet designated thresholds.
- e. Require electric vehicle and compressed natural gas (CNG) infrastructure for projects that meet designated thresholds.

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Albany's architectural character is defined by its historic buildings and neighborhoods as well as the integrated design of modern architectural styles.

Goals:

Capitalize on diverse architectural and neighborhood-specific character to maintain and revitalize neighborhoods.

Preserve and restore existing buildings that are vacant or underutilized through adaptive reuse while allowing for new development and new architecture.

Strategies and Actions:

ARCH-1 Create a historic preservation plan.

ARCH-2 Vacant and abandoned properties reuse.

ARCH-3 Adaptively reuse historic and non-historic structures in brownfields remediation projects.

ARCH-1 Strategy: Develop a historic preservation plan.

Pursue a plan for historic preservation that balances the preservation of designated historic resources and historic districts with the rehabilitation of non-designated buildings and new construction. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form ARCH-2; Economy INV-2; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-2)

- a. Maintain an inventory of all designated and non-designated historic buildings in the City and catalogue architecture and neighborhood typologies. Evaluate existing historic districts, and through public engagement consider the feasibility of new or expanded districts.

BEST PRACTICES: HISTORIC BUILDING CODES, NEW JERSEY REHAB SUBCODE

In many states, building codes are designed solely for new construction leading to expensive retrofits for existing buildings. In an effort to reduce barriers to building renovation and adaptive reuse, New Jersey adopted a "rehab Code" in 1999. The code requires structural and safety regulations that work with an existing building's height, area, and fire resistance ratings. In the first year of implementation, the amount of money dedicated to renovation in New Jersey increased by 41%. The code has resulted in reduced costs for building owners and increased historic preservation efforts in many older cities across the state.

<http://www.state.nj.us/dca/divisions/codes/offices/rehab.html>

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Guided by Albany's abandoned property strategies, vacant and underutilized property on Clinton Avenue in Arbor Hill were renovated with Federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program Funds.

b. Create development incentives for preserving historic buildings and facades and ensuring architectural compatibility between new and existing development. Incentives need to be tailored for specific locations and must be considered after considerable community dialogue, discussions with the Historic Resources Commission, and dialogue with developers, and other stakeholders about the effectiveness of incentives. Incentives may include the following:

- Density, height, and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) bonuses, depending on the district and neighborhood agreement on density limits
- Parking reductions and waivers
- Permit and fee waivers
- Relaxation of certain building code requirements that do not fit within the framework of the historic structure, taking into consideration safety concerns.
- Adoption of a Rehabilitation or Historic Building Code that allows restoration or rehabilitation a historic structure to be made without conformance to all of the requirements of the uniform building code when authorized by the building official.
- Promote the use of existing resources such as historic tax credits and the promote creation of new financial incentives to encourage.
- Promote and uphold the city's designation as "Certified Local Government" as per New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

ARCH-2 Strategy: Vacant and abandoned properties reuse.

Gain control of vacant and abandoned properties to adaptively reuse or redevelop both historic and non-historic structures. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-3; Social PS-1, AC-6.b.; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-1)

Actions:

- a. Incorporate architectural guidelines as part of a vacant and abandoned properties reuse program for both public and private development. Guidelines should adhere to historic district standards where applicable. When existing structures are not located within a historic district, guidelines should focus on enhancing the existing architectural character and the character of the surrounding neighborhood through quality architectural design.
- b. Investigate models for a revised Rehabilitation Building Code that allows flexibility in restoration or rehabilitation of existing structures to encourage reuse.

ARCH-3 Strategy: Adaptively reuse historic and non-historic structures in brownfields remediation projects.

Pursue brownfields and land recycling programs to adaptively reuse historic and non-historic structures. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-4, Natural Resources WW-4, TS-2)

Actions:

- a. Use the brownfield program to fund projects in neighborhoods with a high level of architectural and/or historic character and with a large number of vacant or abandoned properties.
- b. Prioritize funding for brownfield projects to favor projects that reuse existing structures and/or incorporate quality architecture and design guidelines.

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The economic system encompasses the mechanisms and relationships by which the Albany community creates economic activity and commerce. Generating business investment, quality jobs, and economic opportunities for residents is critical to achieving the Albany 2030 vision of a prosperous, sustainable city. A vital economy engages individuals, businesses, and organizations in working independently and together across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, and across regional interests, to achieve these basic goals. As the center of state government, Albany is a major player in the dynamic Capital Region and larger Tech Valley economy. Working with regional agencies, such as the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), the Albany County Office of Economic Development, the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Center for Economic Growth, the Capital Region Workforce Investment Board, the Community Loan Fund of the Capital Region and New York's Tech Valley, will help Albany capture its share of regional prosperity in the form of employment, investment, and the economic diversity that drives trade, business/job growth, and tax revenues.

The historic D&H Railroad headquarters, now home to SUNY administration, overlooks tidal basins at the Riverfront Corning Preserve.

3.2 Economy

The key components of Albany's economic system are employment, investment, and diversity.

The economic system encompasses the mechanisms and relationships by which the Albany community creates economic activity and commerce. Generating business investment, quality jobs, and economic opportunities for residents is critical to achieving the Albany 2030 vision of a prosperous, sustainable city. A vital economy engages individuals, businesses, and organizations in working independently and together across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, and across regional interests to achieve these basic goals. As the center of state government, Albany is a major player in the dynamic Capital Region and larger Tech Valley economy. Working with regional agencies, such as the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), the Albany County Office of Economic Development, the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Center for Economic Growth, the Capital Region Workforce Investment Board, the Community Loan Fund of the Capital Region and New York's Tech Valley, will help Albany capture its share of regional prosperity in the form of employment, investment, and the economic diversity that drives trade, business/job growth, and tax revenues.

EMPLOYMENT

Albany's economic system needs to provide a wide range of jobs capitalizing on the diverse skills residents offer today while, at the same time, ensuring that the workforce can meet the needs of employers tomorrow.

Goal:

Increase employment opportunities at all education/skill levels, and raise local incomes.

Strategies and Actions:

EMP-1 Increase access to jobs.

EMP-2 Increase job opportunities for all residents.

EMP-3 Provide workforce training and continuing education.

EMP-4 Target regional growth industries.

EMP-5 Coordinate economic development and energy/sustainability efforts.



Economy Key Issues

- Downtown Class A office space outperforms suburban markets, however Class B and C offices have high vacancy rates.
- Tight budgets contract spending by state government, SUNY-Albany and other significant employers and important economic actors.
- The ongoing reliance on fading industrial sectors limits job opportunities for Albany's workforce.
- Advancing technology sectors in the Capital Region, such as Albany NanoTech and Global Foundries, are providing new employment opportunities.
- Competition for economic activity from communities within the surrounding region is challenging Albany's ability to attract and retain investment.
- Albany's downtown is challenged to attract spending from area workforce, residents, and visitors and maintain integrity as a business district.

EMP-1 Strategy: Increase access to jobs that meet individual economic needs. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy EMP-2, EMP-3, EMP-5, INV-1; Transportation TR-3; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-2; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3)

Actions:

- a. Nurture entrepreneurship by providing, in partnership with other organizations concerned with economic development as appropriate, technical and financial assistance to new and start-up businesses.
- b. Eliminate barriers to the creation and retention of home-based businesses that are consistent with neighborhood character.
- c. Work with local employers and the Center for Economic Growth to encourage the creation of quality jobs that include flexible benefits and enable employees to plan for retirement.
- d. Work with local employers to improve recruitment by identifying opportunities for “trailing” spouses (person who follows a spouse who takes a new job in different city).
- e. Respond to the special needs of low-income persons by devoting attention and budget resources, as appropriate, to how community development, housing, economic development and public infrastructure services can be deployed to increase job opportunities.
- f. Collaborate with other community agencies and organizations to develop a specific plan to address disparity in income and employment opportunities.
- g. Offer financial/tax incentives to local businesses that utilize apprenticeships and other innovative job training techniques to build a workforce with the appropriate skills for the workforce of tomorrow.
- h. Ensure that Albany residents have physical access to jobs, including transit, carpools, etc., and high speed internet access for those who may be able to work from home.

EMP-2 Strategy: Increase job opportunities for all residents. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy EMP-1, EMP-3, INV-1, INV-2; Institutions RP-1)

Actions:

- a. Convene a regional effort to recruit and retain basic export industries that bring new money into the community and pay nationally competitive wages.
- b. Support the retention, expansion and recruitment of new businesses that pledge to hire local residents.

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Albany is at the center of the booming nanotechnology industry with ground-breaking developments occurring and the globally-renowned College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering at the University at Albany.

- c. Work with the CDRPC, the Community Loan Fund and the Empire State Development Corporation to develop contingency and intervention plans to launch on an emergency basis should substantial employment losses accompany a retrenchment by any of the City's major employers.
- d. Work with high-tech sector employers, such as College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE) and Luther Forest Technology Campus to provide job opportunities to city residents, particularly low-income.

EMP-3 Strategy: Provide workforce training and continuing education to equip residents for jobs in the 21st century economy. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy EMP-1, EMP-2, DIV-2; Social ED-3; Institutions RP-1)

Actions:

- a. Convene a coalition of Albany's business and education leadership (from both primary and secondary schools), including Albany Workforce Investment Board (WIB), Capital Region Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES), and other workforce agencies, to strategize mutually beneficial initiatives and address real and perceived issues, including increasing opportunities for recent high school and/or college graduates to work nearby.

- b. Ensure that Albany’s Career Center workforce services program and state and local agency partner training programs are customer-driven, competency-based, and focused on achieving results.
- c. Improve access to, retain and expand local branches of community colleges. Collaborate with these institutions to provide training for jobs in the new economy (i.e. nanotechnology, green infrastructure, sustainable technologies.)

EMP-4 Strategy: Target regional growth industries by leveraging area intellectual capital.

Actions:

- a. Investigate whether current facilities (sites and buildings) meet the needs of Albany’s growth industries and nurture an ongoing dialogue to encourage their commitment to the City.
- b. Consult with area enterprises—universities (i.e., CNSE at University of Albany), health care institutions, and other businesses—implementing innovative processes, materials, products (i.e., spinoffs from Global Foundries) to identify and facilitate additional opportunities.
- c. Work with the major educational, medical and governmental institutions to develop master facility plans and address special requirements such as shared infrastructure improvements.
- d. Strategize how the Harriman Campus redevelopment activities can advance Albany’s reputation as a player in nanotech and other emerging technologies nationwide.

EMP-5 Strategy: Coordinate the City’s economic development and energy / sustainability efforts to promote and incentivize “green” jobs⁶. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy EMP-1; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-1, EN-4)

Actions:

- a. Create pilot programs and job training materials to enhance the workforce’s access to “green” skills development, such as renewable energy installation and urban agriculture employment.
- b. Improve the environmental performance of City of Albany buildings, vehicles and operations practices.
- c. Incorporate green improvements into performance and construction requirements associated with City infrastructure development/repair projects.

⁶ Green jobs are jobs that reduce waste and pollution and benefit the environment while paying decent wages and benefits that can support a family. Green jobs include jobs in recycling, public transit, the green building industry, and jobs in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

- d. Examine City procurement practices to identify opportunities to include green criteria in selection guidelines.
- e. Streamline permitting and other regulatory procedures and provide incentives for buildings incorporating green improvements into their construction or renovation plans.
- f. Create an awards program to honor businesses that employ environmentally sensitive or green building practices.
- g. Identify funding mechanisms to establish a revolving loan fund for municipal and private energy-related improvements.
- h. Create a “green corps” to provide green job training to students and low-income residents, e.g. Green Corps Chicago.

INVESTMENT

Albany’s policies and practices can influence numerous ingredients of economic activity, such as the availability of infrastructure, land zoned for jobs-producing uses, workforce preparedness, image and identity, incentives and market interventions, and others.

Goal:

Encourage investment and reinvestment throughout Albany that supports economic development and placemaking.

Strategies and Actions:

INV-1 Make Albany attractive for business development.

INV-2 Encourage investment in urban land and buildings for employment and housing.

INV-3 Reinforce, enhance and promote Albany’s distinctive character and identity.

INV-4 Foster coalitions and community-initiated economic development partnerships.

INV-5 Provide a foundation for economic activity.

INV-1 Strategy: Make Albany attractive for business development and appealing to regional economic development practitioners. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-2, LU-4, UD-1, ARCH-1, ARCH-3; Economy EMP-1; Social CHR-7; Transportation MM-2, TR-2, TR-3, VEH-2; Natural Resources WW-4, TS-2; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-5, NI-1, NI-2, NS-2, NS-6; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3)

BEST PRACTICES: CREATING A CONSTITUENCY FOR DOWNTOWN PROVIDENCE - WATER-FIRE

Downtown Providence sits at the confluence of three rivers that, until the 1980s, lay buried beneath asphalt roadways and parking lots. After the City removed these obstructions, a local artist proposed a singular event: Waterfire, in which musicians provide entertainment along the public pathways bordering the rivers while flames dance on platforms within the river itself. Meanwhile volunteers in small boats feed the fires as people stroll along the water’s edge.

Since it first began in 1994, Water-Fire has grown to a weekly event, taking place most Saturday evenings over about four months from sundown until well past midnight. Roadways close down and people travel for hours to partake of the experience; at its peak, WaterFire events have attracted over 75,000 people in a single evening.

<http://www.waterfire.org/>

While Albany's Class A space consistently outperforms its suburban counterparts, Class B and C space remains a challenge.



Actions:

- a. Maintain and market inventories of available properties.
- b. Use zoning and development regulations as tools to create incentives for business development.
- c. Build the downtown residential population by incentivizing high density residential and mixed use development/redevelopment.
- d. Increase multi-modal access to and within downtown, neighborhood commercial centers, employment centers, and industrial/manufacturing centers.
- e. Develop a parking management strategy for downtown and neighborhoods.
- f. Market the downtown, neighborhood commercial centers, and industrial/manufacturing centers.
- g. Pursue brownfields and land recycling programs to attract new investment in vacant and underutilized properties.

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- h. Work with multiple State agencies and the Albany Port District Commission on ways to overcome deed restrictions to commercial development at the Corning Preserve to allow appropriate commercial development at the waterfront.
- i. Develop a green technology park focusing on renewable energy production and innovative solid waste management technologies.

INV-2 Strategy: Encourage investment in urban land and buildings for employment and housing opportunities through development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse.(Interrelated Strategies: Community Form UD-2, LU-1, LU-3, ARCH-1, ARCH-2; Economy INV-1; Social CHR-7, AC-4; Transportation MM-2, PED-2, BIC-2; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-1, NI-2, HDC-2, HDC-3, HDC-4, HDC-5, NS-1; Institutions FP-1, FP-2, FP-6)



Downtown's pedestrian-only Maiden Lane is a lunchtime destination for thousands of employees throughout the week.

Actions:

- a. Implement the Capitalize Albany Plan strategic initiatives for downtown diversification, waterfront development, Harriman Campus redevelopment, Port of Albany business development, neighborhood initiatives for blight removal, and neighborhood commercial center revitalization.
- b. Support programs, policies and organizations that strengthen Downtown Albany as the region's principal employment, cultural, business, and governmental center.
- c. Ensure sufficient inventories of land and buildings suitable for jobs producing uses that reinforce other development goals and foster efficient use of utilities and transportation infrastructure, including parking.
- d. Provide a variety of housing types to meet the varied needs of Albany's households, including market, moderate and low income housing.
- e. Market the City of Albany to new and current residents and visitors. Frame the marketing campaign around building Albany's future while highlighting the City's cultural, historic, recreational, educational and civic assets as important marketing and image-building tools that draw investment to the City's business districts and neighborhoods.



Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) provide services for dense commercial areas, but small business assistance and merchants' associations can prove to be just as effective where BIDs are not plausible.

- f. Promote the use of historic tax credits, as well as green building related incentives to encourage rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings.

INV-3 Strategy: Reinforce, enhance and promote Albany's distinctive character and identity. (Interrelated Strategies: UD-1, ARCH-1, ARCH-2, ARCH-3; Social PS-1, PS-3, PS-4, PS-7; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-1)

Actions:

- a. Reinforce the character and identity of commercial areas as distinct shopping destinations and neighborhood focal points. Where appropriate, convene area businesses, business associations, and neighborhood groups to help define and promote them.
- b. Utilize Albany's unique historical and cultural heritage as a basis for developing an innovative and modern marketing and branding campaign.
- c. Publicize voluntary private sector investments that improve commercial areas and create enjoyable physical environments that attract shoppers from the region and beyond.
- d. Promote public safety enhancements, including design improvements, to ensure that business people, employees and customers feel secure in Albany's commercial areas and deem them attractive, thereby encouraging economic activity.
- e. Continue working with local businesses, residents and property owners (and their associations) to identify and designate historical landmarks, Historic Districts, and Neighborhood Conservation Districts⁷ that contribute to the experience of Albany's commercial areas.
- f. Create design guidelines to ensure that gateways to the City along the region's major arterials develop and redevelop in ways that respect existing businesses, create opportunity for new enterprises, and creates an aesthetically appealing welcome to Albany.
- g. Consider tourism opportunities throughout the City's neighborhoods, including the creation of promotional incentives (e.g. citywide attraction passes that allow visitors access to numerous attractions on one voucher.)

BEST PRACTICES: QUEEN VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT, PHILADELPHIA, PA

The Queen Village Neighborhood Association (QVNA) formed a committee to address serious development issues in the historic neighborhood, particularly "teardowns," often of historic buildings, which were replaced with architecturally incompatible structures. In the past, the QVNA Board had discussed the possibility of becoming a Historic District, a costly and cumbersome process. The QVNA sought ideas to create a less restrictive set of regulations that would be more "user friendly," but that would nonetheless help QVNA fulfill its mission of preserving and protecting the historic nature of the community. In 2004, the Neighborhood Conservation District ordinance was passed by City Council to enable community groups to work with the City Planning Commission to develop design guidelines that would protect distinctive features of the built environment in neighborhoods that otherwise might not be interested in or eligible for historic district protection. Under the legislation, a neighborhood conservation district can be sought in two ways: through a community group application, or through a petition signed by 30 percent of property owners who live in the community. At least 51 percent of the homeowners must approve the proposal prior to adoption by City Council.

⁷ Neighborhood conservation districts (NCD) are areas with a distinct physical character that have a goal of preservation, often to prevent teardowns and incompatible alteration or new construction, but may not merit designation as a historic district. NCD's are typically implemented through zoning overlay districts and must be supported by a majority of owners in the designated area.

BEST PRACTICES: CLEVELAND EVERGREEN COOPERATIVES – CLEVELAND, OH

The Evergreen Cooperatives of Cleveland, Ohio is a pioneering innovative model of job creation, wealth building, and sustainability. Evergreen's employee-owned, for-profit companies are based locally and hire locally. They create meaningful green jobs and keep financial resources within the community. Workers earn a living wage and build equity in their firms as owners of the business.

Evergreen is a partnership between the residents of six of the city's neighborhoods and some of Cleveland's most important "anchor institutions" – the Cleveland Foundation, the City of Cleveland, Case Western Reserve University, the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, and many others.

The first Evergreen Cooperative businesses launched in 2009 and 2010:

- Evergreen Cooperative Laundry – The region's first LEED certified commercial laundry facility
- Ohio Cooperative Solar - An Evergreen portfolio company that owns and/or installs PV solar panel arrays on institutional, government, and commercial buildings and provides weatherization services to make residential and commercial more energy efficient
- Green City Growers Cooperative - A 100% worker-owned, hydroponic, food production greenhouse creating sustainable jobs and local food in Cleveland.

<http://www.evergreencoop.com/index.html>

INV-4 Strategy: Foster coalitions and community-initiated economic development partnerships and initiatives that improve neighborhood livability and reinforce the goals set forth in the Capitalize Albany Plan, neighborhood plans, and the Albany 2030 Plan. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-1; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-2, NS-3; Institutions RP-1, RP-5)

Actions:

- a. Help locally grown community coalitions—neighborhood groups, business associations, etc.—apply community development concepts to their neighborhood residential and commercial districts.
- b. Initiate collaborative activities with other governments, resource organizations, and service providers to promote economic vitality and increase community livability and appeal.
- c. As part of a citywide zoning update, involve area businesses and community stakeholders in a review of the impact of Albany's regulatory system. Evaluate the impact of zoning regulations and procedures on neighborhoods, businesses, and retailers.
- d. Continue land banking activities implemented via the Strategic Properties Acquisition Fund.
- e. Review the performance of existing Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to determine their viability and needs.
- f. Support the creation and operation of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Merchants' Associations or other small business groups where appropriate to stimulate neighborhood business investment and encourage collaborative efforts to manage and market commercial areas.

INV-5 Strategy: Provide a foundation for economic activity through public investment and policy decisions. (Interrelated Strategies: Social ED-2; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-3; Institutions RP-1, FP-5)

Actions:

- a. Work with regional economic development partners to develop and implement a regional framework to guide development and public investment decisions and inform how the annual capital and operating budgets allocate City resources. Continue the efforts started with the 2011 Regional Economic Development Council Local Advisory Report, which fosters collaboration and puts local priorities with regional impact forward to the Council.

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The 330 acre W. Averell Harriman State Office Campus is an unparalleled opportunity for redevelopment and reinvestment.

- b. Link efforts to address quality of life issues and amenities such as crime rate, schools, affordable housing, parks, recreation, libraries, cultural amenities with economic development objectives to foster appreciation for these inter-relationships.
- c. Cultivate a customer service culture within City government to ensure that officials and policies support those investing in Albany.
- d. Assess and target industries vulnerable to climate change, as well as those that will benefit, and develop policies to support economic adaptation and growth.
- e. Investigate best practices and the potential benefits of forming mutual insurance pools to spread the risk of climate change.

DIVERSITY

Trade — exchanging money for goods, services and labor — lies at the heart of the economic system: the greater the economic diversity, the more opportunities for trade and the healthier the economy. As economies shift, change ensues in the trading relationships between economic actors. Change — both beneficial and detrimental — is inevitable. However, a truly sustainable economy is characterized by resilience: the capacity to adapt to economic, social, and environmental change (e.g., rebuilding after

natural disaster, repositioning in response to global economic trends). Obviously much lies beyond local control, but the public sector can create an environment that encourages non-profit, private and public sector organizations to cooperate, collaborate and communicate, which is key to economic resilience.

Goal:

Create economic resilience through diversity.

Strategies and Actions:

DIV-1 Increase economic diversity.

DIV-2 Identify high value, high probability sectors for targeted intervention.

DIV-3 Develop an "adaptive management" approach.

DIV-1 Strategy: Increase diversity by attending to the variety, type, scale, and location of business, industrial and commercial activities. (Interrelated Strategies: Social AC-4; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-1)

Actions:

- a. Target "trading sector" (export) companies that bring jobs and dollars to Albany through state-wide, national, and international business relationships special attention and, as appropriate, intervention.
- b. Emphasize the use of Albany-based companies to supply other Albany and New York State companies to take advantage of the ways local sourcing and supply chains re-circulate capital throughout the local economy and strengthen area businesses.
- c. Identify local retailers and restaurateurs with potential for growth within the local market and beyond.
- d. Identify gaps in the menu of shopping opportunities and help commercial real estate owners and managers recruit appropriate tenants.
- e. Work with Capital Region Local First to develop a strong buy local marketing campaign for Albany. Programs might include sponsoring a Buy Local Bash in Albany or a local currency program to encourage Albany households to shop locally to spur economic activity and hedge against economic downturns.
- f. Support arts and cultural organizations and showcase their contributions to the economy as employers, tourism drivers and evidence of Albany's appeal as a place to live, work and visit.
- g. Attract businesses to locate in Albany through increased outreach, marketing, targeted incentive packages and streamlined permitting.

DIV-2 Strategy: Identify high value, high probability sectors for targeted intervention (e.g., health services, nanotechnology, etc.). (Interrelated Strategies: Economy EMP-3; Social ED-2; Institutions RP-1)

Actions:

- a. For a high value target industry, consider initiating a regional committee involving representatives from area businesses, academic institutions and economic development organizations to identify specific strategies and address any workforce development deficiencies.
- b. Determine area competitiveness by benchmarking similar communities and consulting with industry representatives.
- c. Devise a comprehensive regional approach to industry recruitment and retention.
- d. Pursue development of tailored workforce training programs and curriculum offerings with area academic institutions.
- e. Examine the feasibility of offering locally developed industry-specific incentive packages.

DIV-3 Develop an “adaptive management”⁸ approach to implementing the City’s economic goals and strategies. (Interrelated Strategies: Institutions RP-1, RP-4, RP-6)

Actions:

- a. Examine relevant data, analysis and related studies on an ongoing basis.
- b. Emphasize a cooperative approach to all economic development efforts involving regional economic development practitioners and agencies working throughout the system.
- c. Track progress, measure results, conduct post-mortems and review accomplishments annually.
- d. Adjust and modify goals, strategy, and action plan as necessary.
- e. Ensure continued stakeholder involvement.
- f. Maintain flexibility and resources to ensure adequate capacity to respond to unanticipated threats and opportunities.

BEST PRACTICES: ASHEVILLEHUB INITIATIVE

Greater Asheville, North Carolina sought a means to diversify its economy and introduce a new source of high-paying jobs. The region put together a broad consortium of organizations and individuals with pertinent skills. The group, dubbed “AshevilleHUB,” put aside parochial concerns to focus critical attention on the region’s economic needs and assets.

Research revealed a confluence of talent in government, business, academia and the arts that pointed to the ability to target climate studies and the growing weather prediction industry: global information systems experts, meteorologists, air quality technicians, botanists, mathematicians, statisticians, digital media specialists and talented professionals in other science and technology segments.

Asheville successfully traded on its unique eco-system and reputation as a hotbed of arts and culture to compete successfully in high-profile facility site selection processes, becoming known as a center for climate analysis and decision-making. Asheville is now home to the National Climatic Data Center, the National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center and the Renaissance Computing Institute, both at UNC Asheville, the U.S. Forest Service’s Southern Research Station, and the Air Force Combat Climatology Center.

<http://www.ashevillehub.com/>

⁸Adaptive management is an iterative process of improving management practices and decision-making by learning from the outcomes of previous practices and decisions.





Social systems encompass a range of services that together address the City's ability to meet the health, developmental, and intellectual needs of its citizens. These services are critical for an urban population with generally lower incomes and educational attainment levels than surrounding suburban communities. A key priority identified by participants in the Albany 2030 planning process is to improve education and training at all levels to enable students and adults to succeed in the 21st century economy. To achieve this priority, partnerships among the Albany City School District, higher educational institutions (e.g., University at Albany, College of Saint Rose, Albany Law School, Albany College of Pharmacy, Albany Medical College, and Sage College), and the business community are essential.

Delaware Avenue combines vibrant retail, arts, service and entertainment opportunities with a close-knit community.

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Social Key Issues

3.3 Social

Social systems addressed by the Comprehensive Plan include education, community health and recreation, public safety, arts and culture, and social services.

EDUCATION

Albany's education system includes the teaching and learning of specific skills, but also the imparting of knowledge, good judgment and wisdom throughout an individual's life-cycle. It includes formal primary and secondary education for children, higher education for young adults, workforce training to build particular employment skills, and continuing, individualized learning opportunities for persons of all ages. The institutions that encompass the educational system include public and private primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, technical schools, libraries, community centers, and cultural organizations. See Map 2 for a map of Albany's educational facilities.

Goal:

Elevate the quality of Albany's educational system, including K-12, pre-K, adult education, higher education, libraries, cultural organizations, etc., to a high standard based on established targets.

Strategies and Actions:

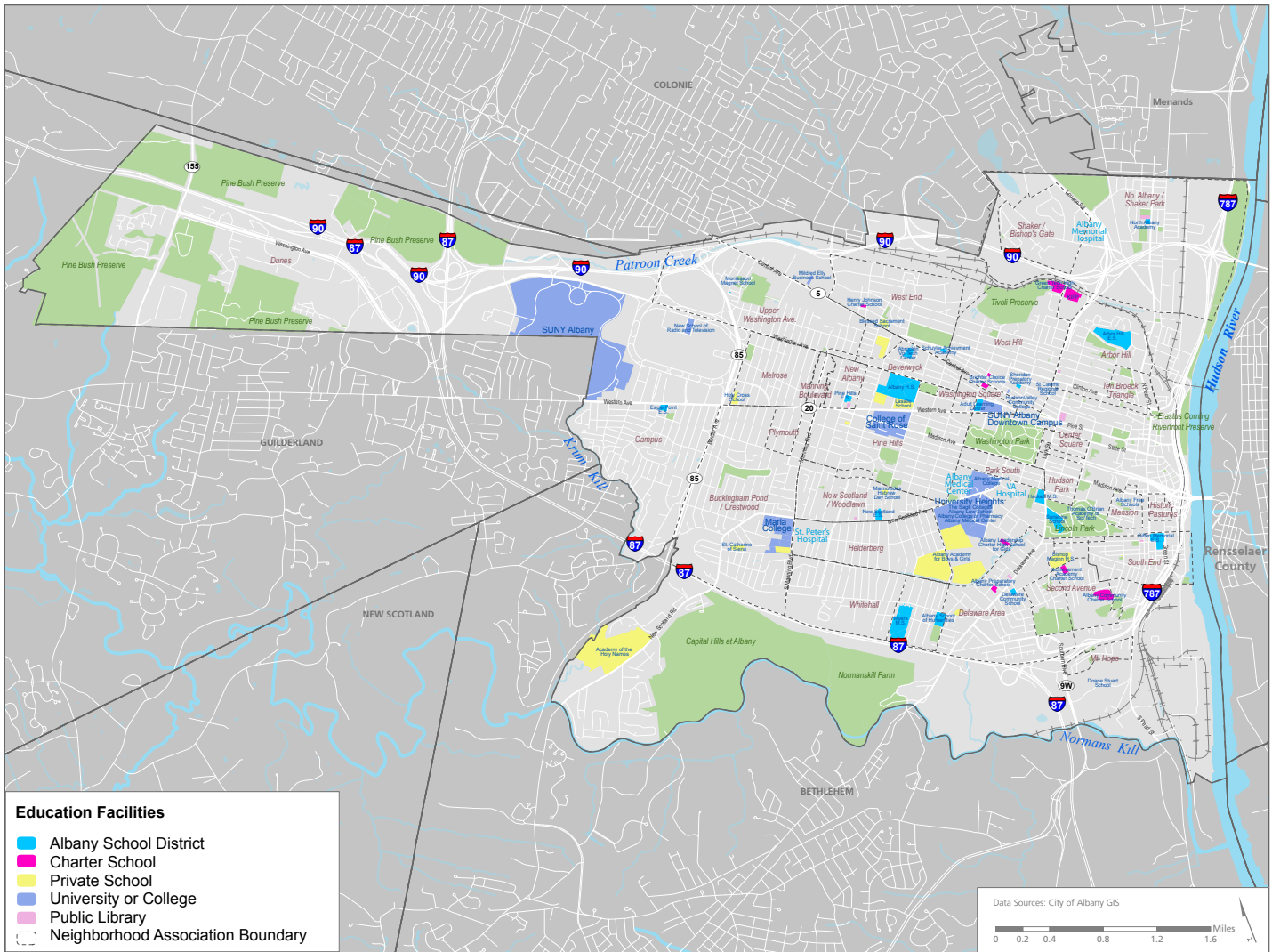
- ED-1 Champion urban education in Albany.
- ED-2 Increase partnerships between institutions and the business community.
- ED-3 Increase partnerships with higher education.
- ED-4 Partner with arts, music and cultural organizations.
- ED-5 Extend digital literacy programs.



- Performance levels among students in the Albany City School District are slowly improving; however, graduation rates are low (53% in 2009) and many families move to surrounding districts.
- Charter schools are run independently of the Albany City School District and local property taxes support both the public and charter schools.
- Despite the many positive benefits from Albany's higher education facilities (e.g., young, creative population), potential negative impacts include tensions between neighborhoods, residents and students, and impact of expanding non-taxable property.
- Overall crime rates have decreased by 30% between 2003 and 2009, but there is still a negative perception of high crime in Albany.
- There are only four full service grocery stores in Albany, and these are not in close proximity to all neighborhoods.
- There are eight seasonal farmers markets in Albany that are accessible to some, but not all neighborhoods.
- Albany is served by over 100 social and human service organizations, many of which have overlapping services.

Although the schools struggle with perception issues, Albany's K-12 students are offered exciting and challenging educational programs and activities.

Map 2 Educational Facilities



ED-1 Strategy: Champion urban education in Albany. (Interrelated Strategies: Social ED-2, ED-3; Institutions FP-6)

Actions:

- a. Assist the Albany School District in establishing and meeting targets for measuring educational performance using indicators from the National Cooperative Education Statistics System (e.g., class absence rate and percentage of schools making adequate yearly progress). The full list of indicators is included at the end of this section.
- b. Create a “Partners in Education Program” with the Albany School District and charter schools to address and integrate the divided education system.
- c. Engage the State Board of Regents to discuss the benefits and potential impacts of charter schools on the Albany City School District.
- d. Coordinate school facility planning and use with community and neighborhood needs.
- e. Market the positive accomplishments of public schools (e.g., magnet school programs, full-day kindergarten, public-private partnerships, rising test scores).
- f. Encourage and support a “sustainability curriculum” in primary and secondary schools to educate students about issues associated with civic responsibility, urban planning, and sustainability and climate change.
- g. Highlight the Albany public library system’s six newly-renovated, state-of-the-art neighborhood branches and main library.

ED-2 Strategy: Increase partnerships between institutions and the business community. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy EMP-3, DIV-2; Institutions RP-1)

Increase partnerships with government, institutions (e.g., State of New York, Albany County, University at Albany, Albany Medical Center), and the business community to expand learning opportunities for all ages (library service expansion, adult education, workforce training), including green job opportunities.

Actions:

- a. Form a permanent public-private partnership that bridges city leaders, the city’s schools, institutions, and the business community to share information, advance research and policy discussions, and act as an “incubator” of innovative education programs.

BEST PRACTICES: AUSTIN, TEXAS PARTNERS IN EDUCATION PROGRAM.

The Austin Partners in Education Program recruits volunteer coaches and mentors to work with a small group of students each week for an entire school year, generally in economically disadvantaged schools. The coaches work with the same teacher and students throughout the year and build relationships through mentoring, encouragement, and group work in reading, writing, or math. During the 2007-2008 school year, test scores improved across the board for schools within the partners in education program and the number of college-ready students increased. During 2008-09, businesses, foundations, and volunteers donated over \$13 million in cash and services and 580,000 volunteer hours.

<http://www.austinpartners.org/>

- b. Assist in the development of pilot programs between the business community and schools in low-income neighborhoods.
- c. Involve the business community in planning for adult education and workforce training to match needed skills with education.
- d. Utilize library branches as local educational resources, and the main branch as a hub of educational opportunities.

ED-3 Strategy: Increase partnerships with higher education. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy EMP-3, EMP-4; Institutions RP-1)

Increase partnerships with higher education institutions to increase access to and promote the benefits of higher education for public school students.

Actions:

- a. Expand existing and develop new outreach/mentorship programs where students from local universities visit public schools to increase awareness of opportunities for higher education in Albany.
- b. Support and expand the efforts of local colleges, universities, and other organizations (e.g., College of Pharmacy, College of St. Rose, Help Yourself Foundation) to expose public school students to the benefits of higher education through college visits, after-school programs, and outreach.
- c. Investigate the potential for a collaboration that ensures admission and financial aid to all City of Albany public school students who achieve benchmarks and graduate high school. See the Syracuse University Challenge program as a model.

ED-4 Strategy: Support and partner with arts, music and cultural organizations to improve educational opportunities and cultural learning for residents of all ages. (Interrelated Strategies: Social AC-1, AC-2, AC-3, AC-4, AC-5)

Action:

- a. Support existing cultural organizations and partner with them to work with adults and youth toward improved educational attainment.
- b. Foster the development of education-focused programs linking students with Albany's strong network of arts, culture, and entertainment organizations (e.g., Albany Symphony Orchestra, USS Slater Foundation, Albany Barn, Albany Institute of History and Art, Capital Repertory, Slater, First Friday Albany).

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The renovation and reuse of The Linda, WAMC's performing arts studio, has been a catalyst for revitalization of this section of Central Avenue.

- c. Promote and support the formation of new cultural organizations that have a focus on providing creative programs and learning opportunities to neighborhood residents.

[ED-5 Strategy: Extend digital literacy programs to all neighborhoods. \(Interrelated Strategies: Utilities & Infrastructure COM-2\)](#)

Action:

- a. Work with City libraries, educational institutions, and neighborhood organizations to expand on the success of the City of Albany/Tech Valley partnership which aims to provide free wireless internet and digital literacy programs.
- b. Support the library system in creating programs and accessibility to bridge the digital divide.

BEST PRACTICES: THE FOOD TRUST SUPERMARKET CAMPAIGN

The Food Trust combines research and policy advocacy to forge innovative public/private partnerships that bring supermarkets to underserved urban and rural neighborhoods. The approach is based on the successful Fresh Food Financing Initiative first launched in Philadelphia in 2001. The Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative is a first of its kind grant and loan program to promote supermarket development in underserved neighborhoods throughout the state. The initiative has provided funding for 88 fresh-food retail projects.

In 2009, New York State Governor David Paterson created the \$10 million Healthy Food / Healthy Communities Initiative, which provides grants and loans to supermarkets who invest in underserved communities throughout the state. The program is modeled on the Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative and administered as a public-private partnership by the Low Income Investment Fund, The Reinvestment Fund and The Food Trust.

<http://www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/super.market.campaign.php>

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND RECREATION

Albany's community health and recreation system includes opportunities and access to parks, recreation, and community centers; walking and biking; healthy food; preventative health care; and physical activity.

Goal:

Improve community health through increased access to recreation opportunities, healthy, fresh food, and healthcare.

Strategies and Actions:

CHR-1 Improve connections between neighborhoods and recreation locations.

CHR-2 Promote walkable neighborhoods and complete streets.

CHR-3 Increase access to healthy food options.

CHR-4 Partner with healthcare institutions to promote preventative health measures.

CHR-5 Increase multi-modal connections to healthcare institutions.

CHR-6 Provide intergenerational opportunities for recreation.

CHR-7 Increase opportunities for recreational use of waterways.

CHR-8 Strategy: Improve and enhance public access to institutional facilities and open spaces.

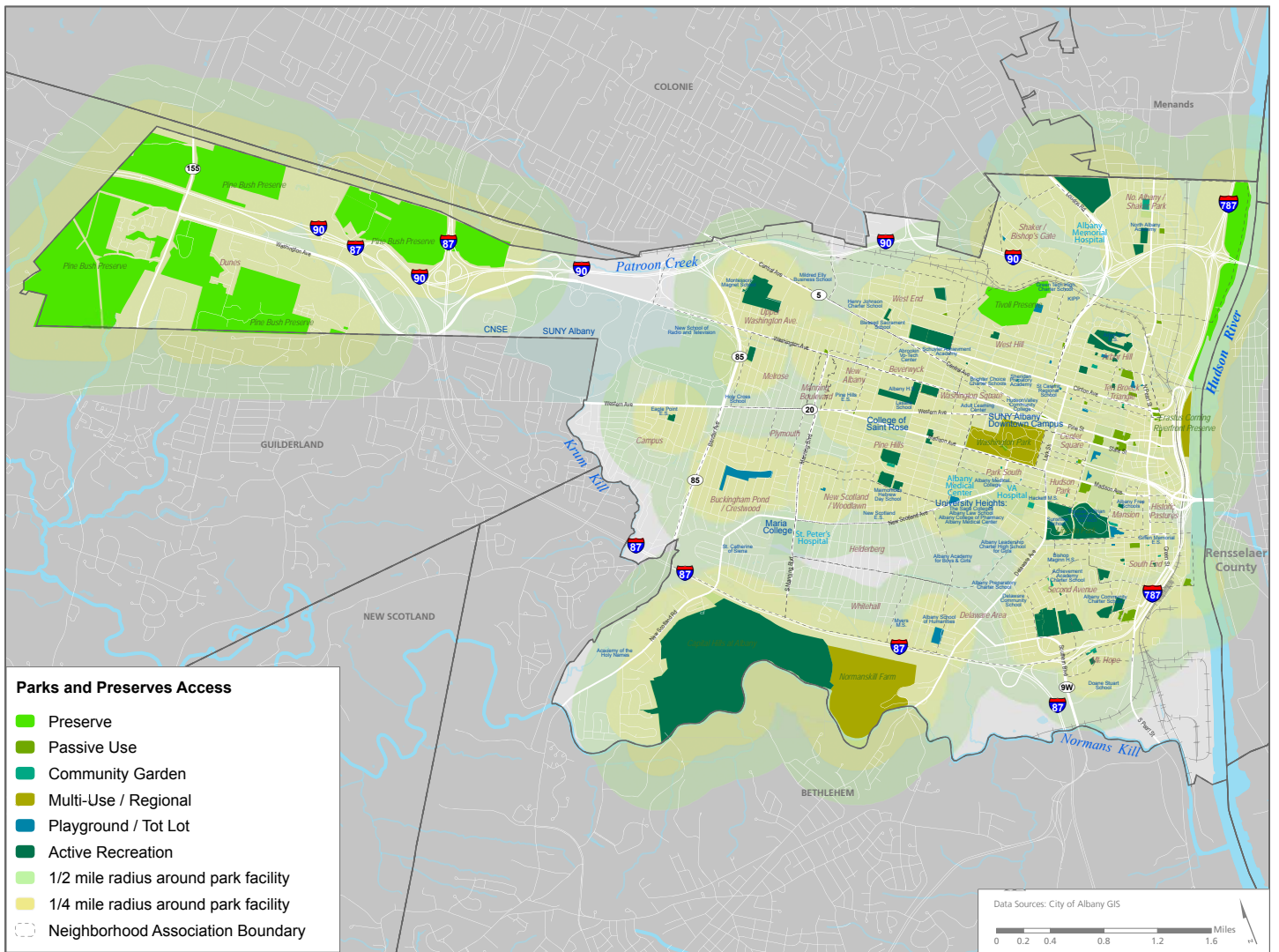
CHR-9 Develop active design guidelines to promote physical activity and health.

CHR-1 Strategy: Improve connections between neighborhoods and recreation facilities. Provide parks, public spaces, recreation and community centers within walking distance of each neighborhood. (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-6, CHR-7; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-4)

Actions:

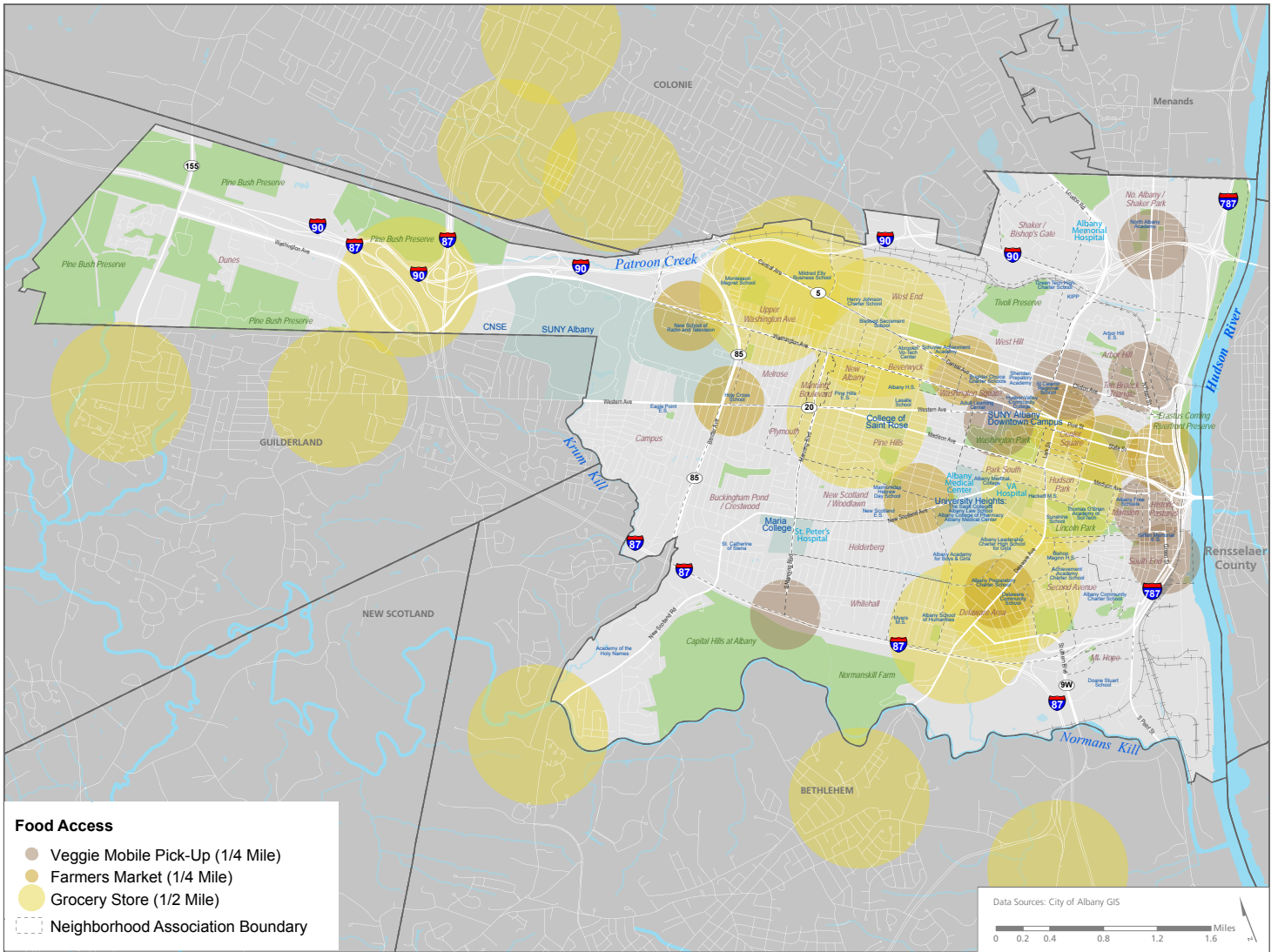
- a. Use service areas for existing parks, public spaces, recreation and community centers (i.e., 1/4 to 1/2 mile walking distance depending on facility type) and develop a parks plan prioritizing neighborhoods in need of facilities based on mapping and quality of recreation facilities. See Map 3, Parks and Open Space Access, for a map of parks and recreation service areas.
- b. Develop a process for tracking facility conditions, usage and need for equipment repair, replacement, or upgrade.

Map 3 Parks and Open Space Access



A detailed list of parks and preserves is located in the Albany 2030 Data Book.

Map 4 Food Access



- c. Partner with public and private schools to share resources and increase or allow community access to school playfields and recreational facilities where appropriate.
- d. Develop partnerships with private and non-profit organizations to fund recreational facilities.
- e. Develop a green infrastructure plan that includes pedestrian, bicycle, and trail connections between neighborhoods, parks, and recreational centers.
- f. Investigate access to and recreational opportunities at the City's waterways including the Normans Kill, Patroon Creek and Tivoli Lake.

CHR-2 Strategy: Promote walkable neighborhoods and complete streets to encourage walking and cycling.

Promote walkable neighborhoods and complete streets to encourage walking and cycling. (Interrelated Strategies: Transportation MM-1, BIC-1; Natural Resources AQ-1)

Actions:

- a. Adopt policies or guidelines to increase safe, comfortable mobility options for bicyclists, transit users and pedestrians.
- b. Continue to implement the City of Albany Bicycle Master Plan.
- c. Designate safe routes to schools and improve sidewalk and bicycle networks in these areas.
- d. Use traffic calming measures (e.g., landscape medians, pavement treatments, bike lanes or sharrows street trees and planters, etc.) to encourage walking and biking and improve safety.

CHR-3 Strategy: Increase access to healthy food options. See Map 4, Food Access, for a map of grocery stores and farmers markets within a ½ mile and ¼ radii of neighborhoods. (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-9; Natural Resources OS-2, OS-3; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-3, NS-7)

Actions:

- a. Partner with organizations such as The Food Trust and Low Income Investment Fund to bring full service grocery stores to underserved neighborhoods.
- b. Identify and market suitable sites for grocery stores within walking distance of neighborhoods and require pedestrian and bicycle amenities during site design (e.g., sidewalks, bike racks, parking located in garages).

BEST PRACTICES: NYC ACTIVE DESIGN GUIDELINES.

New York City's Active Design Guidelines provide strategies for creating healthier buildings, streets, and urban spaces based on the latest research and best practices. Urban design strategies include improving access to public transit, providing easy access to parks and open space, and design public plazas to support recreational activities. Building design strategies for promoting active living through the placement and design of stairs, elevators, and indoor/outdoor spaces are also included.

http://www.nyc.gov/html/ddc/html/design/active_design.shtml

- c. Promote and incentivize community gardens, rooftop gardens, seasonal and year-round farmers markets, and urban gardening.
- d. Develop a partnership between farmers markets and the Albany School District to incorporate fresh, healthy food in city schools and improve nutritional education.
- e. Revise zoning to permit farmers markets in commercial or industrial zoning districts, with appropriate performance standards to minimize any potential negative impacts.
- f. Develop an Urban Agricultural Plan to support efforts to grow and consume more fresh, sustainably produced, and locally grown foods within the city, increasing community health, economic diversity, and local food security.
- g. Encourage local restaurants and stores to carry and use locally-sourced fresh produce, dairy and meat.

CHR-4 Strategy: Partner with healthcare institutions to promote preventative health measures (i.e., nutrition, smoking cessation and prevention, exercise). (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-9)

Actions:

- a. Increase marketing of existing nutrition and healthy living programs and classes.
- b. Encourage use of social media in promoting preventative health care measures and programs.
- c. Work with local partners to develop media campaigns to encourage children to participate in daily physical activity.
- d. Ensure adequate transportation access is available to preventative healthcare institutions and classes.

CHR-5 Strategy: Increase multi-modal and affordable options for connections to healthcare institutions. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-2; Transportation MM-2)

Actions:

- a. Determine the need to improve transit access to and from healthcare institutions.
- b. Consider a volunteer ride-share program to connect people with rides to and from doctor's appointments.

CHR-6 Strategy: Provide intergenerational opportunities for recreation. (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-1)

Actions:

- a. Consider the needs of neighborhood children, teens, adults, and seniors when designing parks and recreational facilities.
- b. Design recreational facilities, parks and programming to attract a wide range of users (e.g., attractive public spaces for resting, opportunities for walking and biking, active play areas).

CHR-7 Strategy: Increase opportunities for the recreational use of City waterways. (Inter-related Strategies: Economy INV-1, INV-2; Social CHR-1; Transportation MM-2, PED-2, TR-3; Natural Resources OS-1)

Actions:

- a. Increase pedestrian and bicycle access to the Hudson Riverfront and the Mohawk-Hudson River Trail. Extend the Mohawk-Hudson River Trail south from the Corning Preserve along the Hudson River to the proposed Albany County Rail Trail via the existing road network.
- b. Improve access to the waterfront, particularly the Albany Rowing Center and Corning Preserve, for all modes of travel to make it easier for residents and visitors to get to water recreation facilities.
- c. Develop a feasibility study for adding a marina and increasing dock space on the Albany side of the Hudson River waterfront.
- d. Identify and address barriers to boat passage for boats of all sizes, including bridge clearance and channel width and depth.
- e. Work with the Albany Rowing Center to improve its appearance and function, including sidewalk repairs, improvements to the parking area, and physical improvements to the existing boathouse or identify a location and funding for a new facility.
- f. Work with the Downtown BID and the Albany Rowing Center to develop a marketing campaign for existing special events (e.g., Head of the Hudson Regatta) and consider new events.
- g. Work with the State and the Albany Port District Commission to change the policy on commercial development at Corning Preserve to provide retail services (refreshments, bike and kayak rentals, etc.) for water recreators and visitors.

BEST PRACTICES: CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED)

CPTED is a multi-disciplinary approach to designing the physical environment that has proven to be effective in helping to deter criminal behavior. Key CPTED principles include:

- **Natural Surveillance:** Increase visibility and the ability of neighbors to observe the space (e.g., a park that fronts a street rather than being hidden behind back yards).
- **Territorial Reinforcement:** Define public and private spaces to create a sense of ownership.
- **Natural Access Control:** Limit opportunity for crime through the selective placement of entrances and exits, lighting, and landscaping to limit access or control flow.

<http://www.cpted.net/>

CHR-8 Strategy: Improve and enhance public access to institutional open spaces. (Interrelated Strategies: Institutions FP-4)

Actions:

- a. Improve connections and access (e.g., sidewalks, signage, trails, bicycle paths, etc.) between institutional facilities, surrounding neighborhoods, and the waterfront.

CHR-9 Strategy: Promote physical activity and community health through active design guidelines. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form UD-1, UD-2, UD-3)

Actions:

- a. Develop citywide active design guidelines.
- b. Incorporate opportunities for physical activity (e.g., walking, stair climbing, plazas and recreation areas, visible activity areas) into new development, while still ensuring universal access.
- c. Consider placement of parking, signage for transit stops, and bike racks when designing sites.
- d. Consider developing a citywide campaign such as Shape Up Somerville to increase physical activity and healthy eating through programming, physical infrastructure improvements, and policy work.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety services in Albany refer to police, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS). The Albany Police Department and Department of Fire and Emergency provide public safety services to residents. In addition to formal public safety services, community design, neighborhood condition, and the presence of town watch and other community organizations greatly impact public safety.

Goal:

Improve and maintain public safety in all parts of the City, including crime prevention and pedestrian mobility.

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Public safety emerged as a major theme throughout the community participation efforts.

Strategies and Actions:

PS-1 Remove blighting influences.

PS-2 Promote walkable neighborhoods and complete streets.

PS-3 Expand and promote neighborhood watch programs.

PS-4 Focus on a community policing method.

PS-5 Partner with the New York State Police to address the regional nature of crime.

PS-6 Enhance resiliency against natural events.

PS-7 Utilize crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED).

PS-1 Strategy: Remove blighting influences (vacant/substandard properties) to prevent or reverse neighborhood decline. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-3, ARCH-2; Economy INV-3; Social AC-6; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-1)

Action:

- a. Prioritize vacant and abandoned property acquisition and redevelopment to implement the land use framework and connect land use and transportation networks based on criteria and assessment methods established in the City of Albany Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Plan.
- b. Continue the City's national best practice Vacant Building Court, Vacant Building Registry and Vacant Building Inventory. Expand these practices to strategically assess properties, and incorporate new technology.
- c. Develop incentives for the rehabilitation and reuse of vacant and substandard properties to promote reuse of financially challenging properties and provide gap financing where strategically necessary.
- d. Enhance stabilization code and practices to require artistic board-up and tighter restrictions for building maintenance while vacant.
- e. Capitalize and formalize a City of Albany Strategic Acquisition Fund and Land Bank that can acquire and hold strategic properties for stabilization and future reuse. Work with the County to develop a beneficial partnership under the recently approved New York State Landbank legislation.
- f. Develop a citywide vacant/abandoned property strategic disposition strategy based on assessment of each property's structural soundness, market value, historic value and other indicators outlined in the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Plan.
- g. Identify, assess and remediate brownfields using available State funding where appropriate.

PS-2 Strategy: Promote walkable neighborhoods and complete streets to protect pedestrians and keep "eyes on the street." (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form UD-3; Economy INV-3; Transportation MM-1)

Action:

- a. Implement complete street design standards (e.g., using design guidelines for different types of streets) to increase visibility and safely accommodate a range of users (e.g., walkers, bikers, transit users, and drivers) as streets are targeted for improvements.

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Spectrum 8 Theatres are a premier regional destination for both Hollywood and independent films.

PS-3 Strategy: Expand and promote neighborhood watch programs. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-3; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-5)

Action:

- a. Work with community stakeholders and the Albany Police Department to expand neighborhood watch programs.

PS-4 Strategy: Focus on a community policing method. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-3; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-5)

Actions:

- b. Strengthen relationships between the police department and community leaders and neighbors in areas where crime is an issue.
- c. Strengthen the relationship between the police department and schools.

BEST PRACTICES: PADUCAH, KY ARTIST RELOCATION PROGRAM.

A national model for using the arts to foster economic and neighborhood investment, the Paducah, KY program offers financial incentives to artists interested in relocating. The program is managed by the Paducah Renaissance Alliance and offers incentives such as free or low-cost properties, moving assistance, start-up business assistance, and restaurant grants to qualified artists and businesses. Since it began in 2000, the program has relocated more than 50 artists to the LowerTown Arts Districts. Over \$30 million has been invested in the neighborhood since 2000.

http://www.paducahalliance.org/artist_relocation_program.php#about

PS-5 Strategy: Partner with the New York State Police to address the regional nature of crime. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-3; Institutions RP-5)

Action:

- a. Increase coordination between the City and State police departments through regular communication and information sharing.

PS-6 Strategy: Enhance resiliency against natural events linked to climate change and that threaten the well being of the community. (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources OS-3; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-11; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-1)

Actions:

- a. Complete and implement the Albany Climate Adaptation Plan to anticipate ways the city will need to adjust its resource management, infrastructure, and land use planning incrementally to address both current climate variability and future climate change.
- b. Identify populations most vulnerable to a changing climate and increase resilience in those populations.

The Downtown BID's annual Sculpture in the Streets exhibit brings nationally-recognized artists to Albany to provide one-year cycles of public art.



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- c. Assess emergency response plans in anticipation of climate change impacts and develop a citywide natural disaster response plan to anticipate and quickly respond to extreme weather and other emergency events.
- d. In the emergency response plan, include provisions for emergency shelter and temporary relief (such as cooling stations in response to rising temperatures and more frequent and intense heat waves) to be directly used for protection from environmental conditions and natural disasters.
- e. Partner with the New York State Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to increase coordination between the City of Albany Police and Fire and Emergency Services Departments and the state and region.

PS-7 Strategy: Utilize Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) to increase public safety. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-3; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-5)

Action:

- a. Increase coordination between City departments to include best practices for CPTED in site plan review.
- b. Communicate CPTED principles to local property owners and neighborhood associations for implantation at the neighborhood level.

ARTS AND CULTURE

Arts and cultural elements in Albany include the City's museums, galleries, theaters, exhibition areas, historic sites, and music venues. A strong emphasis on arts and culture can impact the City's systems in a number of ways (e.g., improving education, public space, livability, etc.).

Goal:

Promote and enhance arts and culture in the City.

Strategies and Actions:

- AC-1 Promote cultural identity.
- AC-2 Make art education available at all school levels.
- AC-3 Foster opportunities for public art.
- AC-4 Strengthen the City's arts and cultural districts.
- AC-5 Enhance access to arts and cultural facilities.

BEST PRACTICES: HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE PROJECT

The Harlem Children's Zone Project is a unique, holistic, and tremendously successful approach to rebuilding a community from the ground up, through programs that focus on the social, health, and educational development of children. "Baby College" is one innovative program that offers a nine-week parenting workshop to expecting parents and those raising a child up to three years old, the years that are proven to be essential for future educational success.

The Harlem Children's Zone Practitioners Institute provides resources and low-cost workshops to communities interested in organizing a similar strategy for early childhood education.

<http://www.hcz.org/about-us/hcz-practitioners-institute>

BEST PRACTICES: PHILADELPHIA MURAL ARTS PROGRAM

The Mural Arts Program began in 1984 as a component of the Philadelphia Anti-Graffiti Network to reach out to graffiti writers and redirect their energies to constructive mural painting, providing opportunities for them to channel their creative talent. The murals they create on vacant properties and other structures throughout city add color, beauty, and life to an older, industrial city struggling with decades of economic distress.

In 1996, the Anti-Graffiti Network became the Mural Arts Program, which has produced over 3,000 murals throughout the City of Philadelphia. Mural Arts' education programs are offered free and are targeted to at-risk youth. The programs use an intensive curriculum that involves mural-making as a dynamic means to engage youth and to teach transferable life and job skills.

The Mural Arts Program has also become a national leader in arts in criminal and restorative justice, currently offering educational programs in local prisons and rehabilitation centers using the restorative power of art to break the cycle of crime and violence in communities.

<http://muralarts.org/>

AC-6 Provide opportunities for live-work space for artists.

AC-7 Create a welcoming atmosphere for artists.

AC-1 Strategy: Promote cultural identity through community engagement. (Interrelated Strategies: Social ED-4)

Actions:

- a. Work with the City's arts and cultural organizations to expand and promote Albany's offering of cultural programs (e.g., festivals, concerts, art fairs, historic celebrations, etc.).
- b. Increase awareness of the City's historic and cultural resources through special events, exhibitions, walking tours, and public art.

AC-2 Strategy: Make art education available at all school levels and through community service. (Interrelated Strategies: Social ED-4)

Actions:

- a. Encourage Albany public and private schools to include art and music education as a part of their regular curriculum and increase opportunities for after-school extracurricular participation in the arts.
- b. Develop partnerships between the Albany School District and arts organizations to encourage students to participate through community service.

AC-3 Strategy: Foster opportunities for public art. (Interrelated Strategies: Social ED-4)

Actions:

- a. Integrate public art into streetscape and transit station improvements (e.g., light poles, gateway signage, bus shelters, etc.) where appropriate.
- b. Include public art in planning for parks, plazas, and public buildings.
- c. Continue to implement innovative public art programs that encourage public interaction (e.g., Albany Sculpture in the Streets).
- d. Explore the creation of a Public Art Review Process to streamline the installation of new public art projects.

AC-4 Strategy: Strengthen the City's arts and cultural districts. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-2, DIV-1; Social ED-4, AC-6, AC-7; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-5)

Actions:

- a. Define and market existing arts and cultural districts in Albany.
- b. Include arts and cultural districts in branding and marketing materials to encourage city living and homeownership in Albany's neighborhoods.
- c. Increase marketing of the City's public art collection on the City of Albany's website and in promotional materials (e.g., Empire State Plaza Art Collection).
- d. Build on the success of 1st Friday Albany and the Art on Lark Festival to expand the location and types of arts and cultural festivals and events (e.g., open studio tours).
- e. Support community organizations in efforts to develop low-cost artist studio and performance space.
- f. Promote and support the formation of new cultural organizations that have a focus on providing creative programs and learning opportunities to neighborhood residents.

AC-5 Strategy: Enhance access to arts and cultural facilities from and within the City's neighborhoods. (Interrelated Strategies: Social ED-4)

Actions:

- a. Promote access for residents to the City's museums and cultural facilities (e.g., through special low-cost admission days or events).
- b. Determine the availability and need for arts and cultural programming and educational classes at existing community centers.



Children of all ages have been welcomed to participate in Albany 2030 so their voices are heard in planning for their future.

AC-6 Strategy: Provide opportunities for live-work space for artists. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-3, ARCH-2; Social PS-1; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-1)

Actions:

- a. Develop public/private partnerships to adaptively reuse vacant buildings for live-work studio space.
- b. Encourage construction of affordable live-work space through the reuse of vacant land and the City's proposed Land Banking Program.

AC-7 Strategy: Attract artists to relocate to Albany by creating a welcoming atmosphere for artists. (Interrelated Strategies: Social AC-4, AC-6; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-2)

Actions:

- a. Use zoning, such as a live-work overlay, and development regulations to encourage mixed-income and affordable housing units throughout the City (Hyperlink: Housing & Neighborhoods HDC-2).
- b. Highlight local artists in exhibition/wall space within the City's public buildings.
- c. Invite artists to participate in competitions for public art and other design installations (e.g., lighting, bicycle or transit design elements).
- d. Partner with new and emerging arts and cultural organizations to increase opportunities for artists

SOCIAL SERVICES

Goal:

Improve the social well-being of Albany citizens in need.

Strategies and Actions:

SS-1 Maintain access to human service agencies, expand service where needed.

SS-2 Encourage coordinated promotion and access to social services.

SS-3 Focus on strategies for preparing low-income children for K-5 schooling.

SS-4 Consider social and environmental equity in all decisions.

SS-5 Foster collaboration between organizations that provide similar services.

SS-6 Improve and enhance public access to institutional facilities and services.

SS-7 Improve and coordinate homelessness assistance programs.

SS-1 Strategy: Maintain access to existing human service agencies and expand services where needed. (Interrelated Strategies: Social SS-2, SS-6, SS-7)

Action:

- a. Review the inventory of social service agencies and identify gaps in services.
- b. Support, promote and expand current specialized services for target groups such as veterans and refugee populations.

SS-2 Strategy: Encourage coordinated promotion and access to social service opportunities. (Interrelated Strategies: Social SS-1, SS-4, SS-5, SS-7)

Actions:

- a. Co-locate social services agencies and share resources between organizations where feasible to reduce costs, leverage resources of multiple organizations, and mitigate potential inefficiencies.
- b. Assist with developing shared outreach materials for the City's social service agencies.

SS-3 Strategy: Focus on proven strategies for preparing low-income children for K-5 schooling (e.g., pre-natal care, home visits from a registered nurse following birth, pre-school programs). (Interrelated Strategies: Social ED-1, ED-2)

Actions:

- a. Partner with the City's healthcare institutions (e.g., Albany Medical Center, St. Peter's Hospital, non-profit service providers, and others) to increase access for all residents to prenatal and early childhood health care.
- b. Develop parenting and early childhood education to prepare children for primary school. Use the Harlem Children's Zone Practitioners Institute as a resource.

SS-4 Strategy: Consider social and environmental equity in all decisions. (Interrelated Strategies: Social SS-2, SS-6, TR-3, TR-4)

Actions:

- a. Evaluate the social and environmental equity of all proposed capital improvement projects.
- b. Develop a comprehensive map of all social service providers, sites, and organizations to better allow for informed decision making.

SS-5 Strategy: Foster collaboration between organizations that provide similar services to reduce competition for funding and improve service efficiency and effectiveness. (Interrelated Strategies: Social SS-1, SS-2, SS-7)

Actions:

- a. Work with existing organizations to partner and share resources and collaborate on marketing the services they offer.
- b. Identify gaps in service that are not being met through existing organizations.

SS-6 Strategy: Improve and enhance public access to institutional facilities and services. (Interrelated Strategies: Social SS-1; Institutions RP-4)

Actions:

- a. Expand access to the existing network of community facilities and strengthen linkages between health care and social service organizations. Albany has a strong network of health care providers and hospitals. Health care organizations should connect with and support social service providers to improve access to services for residents (e.g., housing assistance, homelessness assistance and prevention, family counseling, preventative health services, etc.) and more efficiently serve a wider demographic.

SS-7 Strategy: Improve and coordinate homelessness assistance programs. (Interrelated Strategies: Social SS-1, SS-2, SS-5; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-10)

Actions:

- a. Work with existing homeless assistance organizations to partner and share resources.
- b. Identify gaps in service that are not being met through existing homeless assistance organizations
- c. Study the effectiveness of preventative programs, including housing subsidies, supportive services (substance abuse, mental health, etc.) coupled with permanent housing, legal support for evictions, and identifying and overcoming barriers to permanent housing.
- d. Consider developing a housing and homelessness strategy that includes the following elements:
 - Identify homeless demographics and the root causes of homelessness in Albany
 - Evaluate existing programs and identify overlaps and gaps
 - Identify proven strategies for homeless prevention, permanent housing solutions, temporary assistance, and continuing services

Best Practices: National Cooperative Education Statistics System Indicators
(see Strategy ED-1)

- Class Absence Rate (Teacher & Student)
- Percentage of Schools Making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
- Average Student Assessment Score
- Percentage of Students Demonstrating Proficient or Advanced Performance
- Average Class Size
- Percentage Graduate Participation in College Entrance Testing
- Average Student Score on College Entrance Testing
- Percentage Students Completing (Advanced) Courses
- Percentage Students Enrolling in (Advanced) Courses
- Teacher's Education Level
- Teacher's Experience Level
- Number of Expulsion Incidents Per 100 Students
- Completion Rate / Graduation Rate
- Annual High School Dropout Rate
- Student Retention Rate
- Teacher Retention Rate
- Percentage School Capacity Used
- Student Enrollment Stability Rate
- Instructional Computer / Student Ratio
- Student / Teacher Ratio
- Percentage of Students Receiving Out-of-School Suspensions
- Administrator / Teacher Ratio
- Schoolwide Truancy Rate
- Reported Violent Incidents Per 100 Students
- Percentage Completers of Vocational/Technical Programs





Albany's reason for being is transportation: it was founded in the 17th century as a trading post on the Hudson River. Today, the Port of Albany is an important hub for the movement of goods; and other transportation modes, such as rail, automobile and air travel, have evolved over time. Albany's historic pattern of interconnected streets and buildings is friendly for pedestrians, although the pattern has been disrupted in some locations (most notably by I-787) to accommodate vehicular traffic.

A multi-modal transportation system provides citizens with the ability to safely and efficiently move around, in, and out of the City via different modes of transportation (e.g. bike, transit, walking, auto). By supporting multiple modes, a more balanced, complete transportation system can reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and encourage walking, biking, and transit ridership.

Albany's transportation infrastructure has evolved dramatically over its 400 year history providing connections and creating unique challenges.

3.4 Transportation

The key components of a complete transportation system for Albany are: multi-modal connections; pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular travel; the port/freight movement; and air transportation.

MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIONS

Albany seeks to diversify the ways that neighborhoods and centers are connected to each other and the region through the development of an extensive, efficient, and safe network of complete streets, mass transit, bikeways, trails and sidewalks. See Maps 5 and 6 for Multi-Modal Transportation Opportunities for transit, roadways and parking.

Goal:

Increase options to the private automobile to move people within and between Albany, the Capital Region, and beyond.

Strategies and Actions:

MM-1 Develop a Complete Streets policy.

MM-2 Coordinate transportation investments to support preferred land uses.

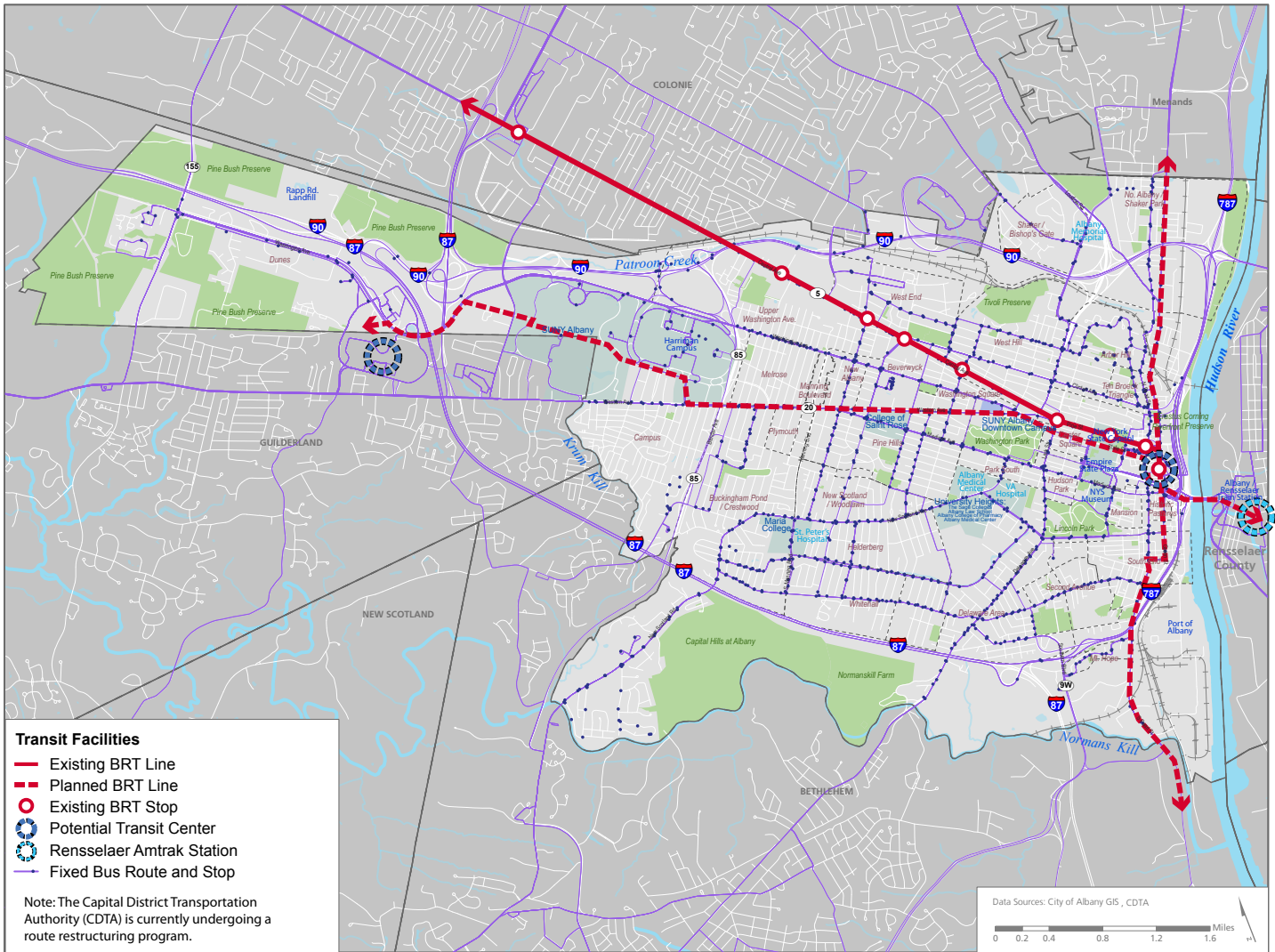


Transportation Key Issues

- The average automobile commute time for Albany residents is 18.3 minutes, shorter than the national average of 25.5 minutes.
- In 2000, 13% of Albany residents used public transportation to travel to work and 1% rode a bike. 11% of Albany residents walk to work, quadruple the national average.
- CDTA ridership increased 17.5% between 2006 and 2008.
- In 2011, CDTA began operation of its first bus rapid transit route, branded BusPlus, on Central Avenue between Albany and Schenectady.
- Highways and rail lines are significant barriers to walking in Albany.
- The Bicycle Master Plan has expanded the network of bikeways and trail access.
- North-south roadways through the City provide inadequate connectivity between neighborhoods and east-west arterials.

Within only 1.5 years of the completion of the Bicycle Master Plan, more than 8 miles of bicycle infrastructure was installed.

Map 5 Multi-Modal Transportation Opportunities: Transit



Sustainability Building Blocks: The Comprehensive Plan Systems

Community Form

Economy

Social

Transportation

Natural Resources

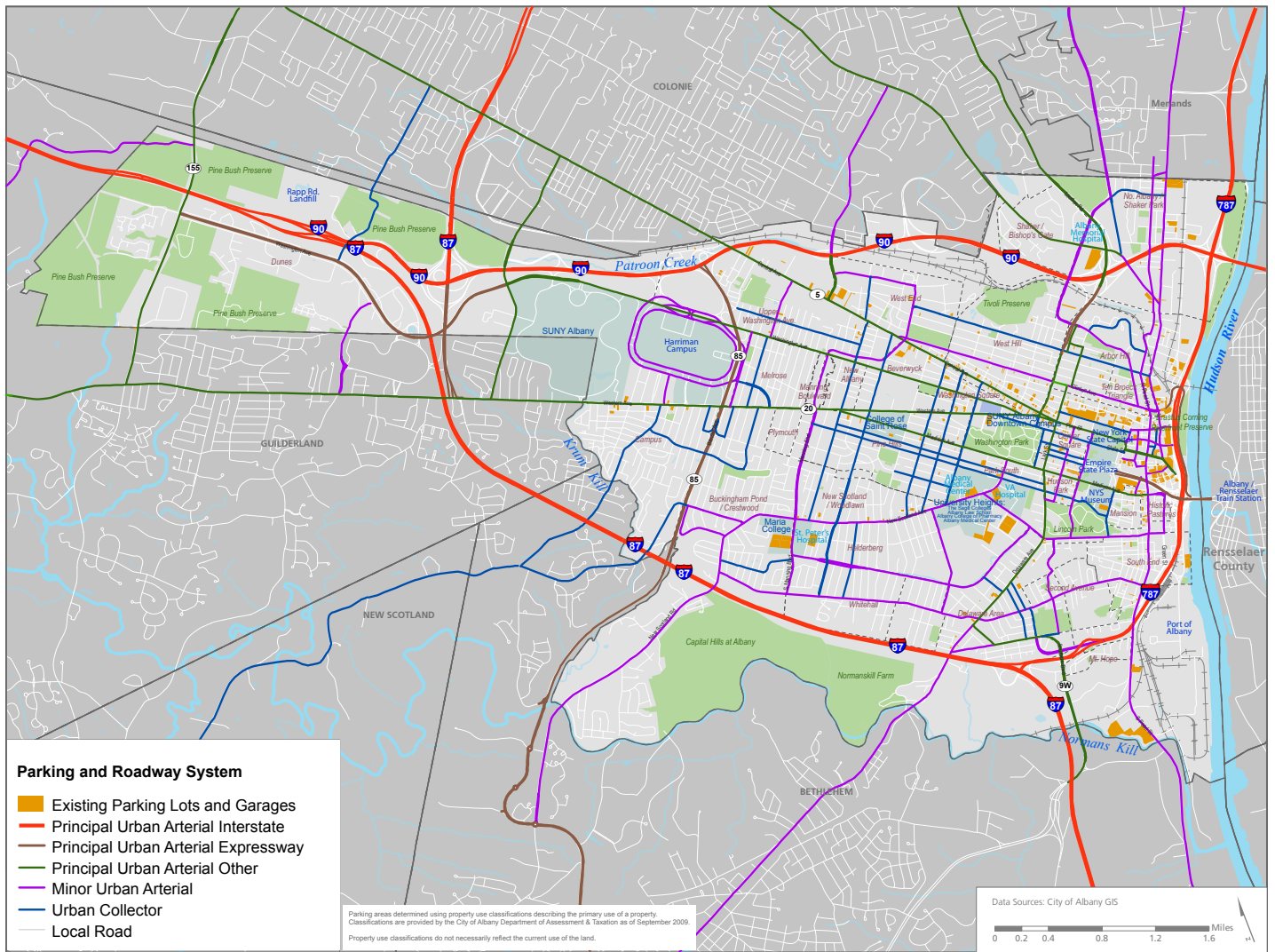
Housing and Neighborhoods

Utilities and Infrastructure

Institutions

Systems Interrelationships

Map 6 Multi-Modal Transportation Opportunities: Roadways and Parking



BEST PRACTICES: NEW JERSEY'S NETWORK OF COMPLETE STREETS POLICIES

In October 2009, The Township of Montclair, NJ became the first municipality in the state to adopt a Complete Streets policy. The policy ensures that in both new construction and reconstruction, travel by pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit, and motorized vehicles and their passengers shall be safely accommodated.

Later in 2009, the New Jersey Department of Transportation adopted a Complete Streets policy for the state, implemented through any project funded under their capital program. The policy encourages other municipalities to adopt similar legislation, which, to date, has been accomplished by West Windsor Township, Monmouth County, and the Borough of Red Bank.

Complete Streets in New Jersey: A Compilation of State, County and Municipal Policies, Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University, August 2010.

www.njbikeped.org

MM-1 Strategy: Develop and Implement a Complete Streets policy.

Maintain and enhance the existing street network to encourage the safe and efficient mobility of all persons, regardless of age or ability, whether walking, biking, riding transit, or driving. Complete streets policies seek to make streets safer and more functional, convenient, and enjoyable for travelers using all modes. In August, 2011, New York State's Complete Streets legislation was signed into law, requiring that all state, county and local transportation facilities that receive both federal and state funding are subject to department of transportation oversight to consider safe travel on the road network by all users.⁹ (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-2; Transportation BIC-1, VEH-4; Natural Resources AQ-1, SW-3; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3)

Actions:

- a. Develop a Complete Streets program including design standards, land use plans, and zoning regulations that provide the highest level of integration between pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders as appropriate based on the surrounding land use and street types. Adopt Complete Streets legislation that would address the retrofit of existing and design of new and reconstructed roadways.
- b. Identify problem areas and implement appropriate traffic calming measures (e.g., landscape medians, pavement treatments, bike lanes, street trees and planters) to increase safety while maintaining efficient traffic flow.
- c. Incorporate new transportation modes into redesigned streets, such as electric cars, mopeds and other types of personal mobility devices.
- d. Implement "green streets" as part of a Complete Streets program, including porous pavement treatments, street trees, rain gardens, bioswales, and other such techniques. This can be incorporated into a Green Infrastructure plan for the city.
- e. Consider climate vulnerabilities when installing new or rehabilitating existing transportation infrastructure.

⁹S5411-2011: Enables safe access to public roads for all users by utilizing complete street design principles. The legislation requires that all state, county and local transportation facilities that receive both federal and state funding are subject to department of transportation oversight to consider safe travel on the road network by all users of all ages, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation users through complete design features.

Community Form

Economy

Social

Transportation

Natural Resources

Housing and Neighborhoods

Utilities and Infrastructure

Institutions

Systems Interrelationships

MM-2 Strategy: Coordinate transportation investments to support preferred land uses.

Integrate planning for transportation and land use by coordinating transportation planning decisions, policies and strategies to be supportive of the land use vision (e.g., transit-oriented development). (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-2, UD-1, UD-2; Economy INV-1, INV-2; Social CHR-5, CHR-7; Transportation TR-2; Natural Resources AQ-1, WW-5; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-2 Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3; Institutions RP-2)

Actions:

- a. Review all new development from a transportation perspective to ensure adequate roadway facilities, and to advance the implementation of facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, transit and other alternatives to the automobile.
- b. Use zoning to promote mixed use and transit-oriented development around transit hubs and along transit corridors, such as neighborhood commercial centers, the downtown, and along bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors.
- c. Promote patterns of land uses, such as high density clustered development and mixed-use zoning that encourage maximum potential for pedestrian, bicycling, and transit mobility throughout the city and reduce automobile usage.
- d. Develop contextual design standards for complete streets that provide adequate capacity for all users and are coordinated with the type of land use in which the street is located. This includes creating walkable neighborhoods where all trips need not be made by car, and encouraging transit use through easy, user-friendly service and appropriately sized streets that naturally calm traffic while facilitating circulation and improving safety.
- e. Work with the NYS Department of Transportation and the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) on the I-787 Integrated Corridor Study. The intent of the study is to evaluate short and long term infrastructure needs for I-787 including near term access improvements to support the City's downtown and waterfront economic development initiatives. In addition, the study will evaluate opportunities for alternative designs (including an urban arterial) that reduce long term maintenance costs and/or improve the compatibility of I-787 with the community. The highway currently represents a visual and physical barrier between the City and its waterfront. Replacing the elevated highway with an urban arterial at or below grade would have a dramatic impact on the visual attractiveness of the City of Albany, walkability and potentially create additional developable land.

BEST PRACTICES: NEW HAVEN, CT ROUTE 34 CONNECTOR REMOVAL.

Cutting through the center of downtown New Haven is the Route 34 Connector – a portion of a highway that was never fully constructed. This highway segment divides the city in two, preventing pedestrian access, limiting development, and creating an eyesore.

In 2004, the City of New Haven convinced the State to allow removal of the highway. After completing initial environmental studies, in 2010, New Haven received \$16M in federal grants to redevelop the road as an urban highway. This effort will restore the city street and pedestrian networks, and provide significant developable land for the City. The transformation is expected to create 2,000 construction jobs and 1,000 permanent jobs, while continuing to maintain the effectiveness of the transportation network.

www.cityofnewhaven.com

Albany's historic development pattern naturally lends itself to pedestrian activity.



PEDESTRIAN

Many of Albany's neighborhoods are served by a network of sidewalks, but opportunities exist to improve connections between and within neighborhoods, and in connections to other activity centers in the city and region. An upgraded pedestrian environment will encourage use by people of all ages and abilities, for transportation, recreation and health.

Goal:

Provide for safe pedestrian mobility throughout the City.

Strategies and Actions:

PED-1 Maintain & improve sidewalk connections.

PED-2 Expand greenways.

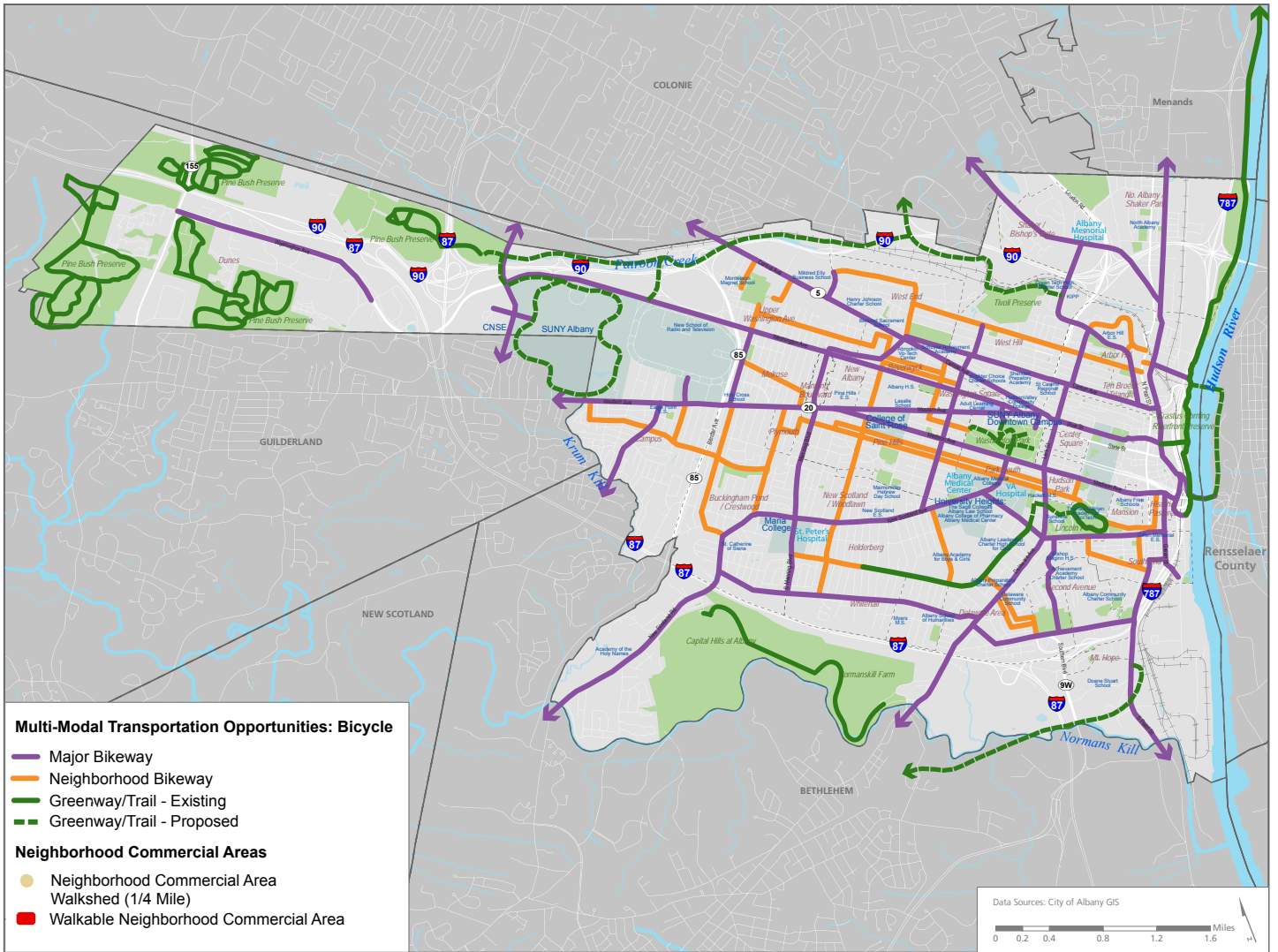
PED-1 Strategy: Maintain & improve sidewalk connections. (Interrelated Strategies: Transportation MM-1, MM-2; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-4)

Maintain and improve the existing sidewalk network to increase safety and provide connections between residences, schools, transit, activity centers, work, and public facilities for persons of all ages and abilities.

Actions:

- a. Develop and fund procedures for regular maintenance of sidewalk infrastructure repair to maintain a state of good repair of all City sidewalks.
- b. Develop a regularly updated pedestrian plan for the City of Albany, including a citywide sidewalk inventory identifying condition and gaps, implementation plan, and design standards as part of the Complete Streets program.
- c. Implement a Safe Routes to School program, which enables community leaders, schools and parents to improve safety and encourage more children to safely walk and bicycle to school. See www.saferoutesinfo.org for more information.
- d. Improve street crossings to meet the safety standards of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), local and state regulations, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Standards would include elements such as crosswalks, lighting, median refuges, reduced turning radii, corner sidewalk widening, ramps, signs, signals, and landscaping. Give priority to intersections near schools, senior housing, community and senior centers, parks and transit stations and stops.
- e. Establish a tracking and monitoring system for vehicle-pedestrian crashes. Such a system will be used by the City as a data driven approach to identifying potential pedestrian improvements. Complete streets and other mechanisms will also be utilized by the City to implement pedestrian improvements and enhance safe walking environments pro-actively throughout the City.
- f. Clarify and communicate the responsibilities of property owners for sidewalk maintenance (i.e. snow removal and planting strip upkeep).

Map 7 Multi-Modal Transportation Opportunities: Bicycle



PED-2 Strategy: Expand Greenways. (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-7; Transportation BIC-2; Natural Resources OS-1; Institutions RP-2)

Continue to improve and expand the current and planned greenways in the City by connecting with local and regional pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Actions:

- a. Identify existing railroad rights-of-way for potential conversion to other uses such as walking and biking trails, or integration with new transit services.
- b. Work in cooperation with, and support groups advocating for, the Albany County Rail Trail.
- c. Improve key connection points from the bicycle and pedestrian network to greenways, including connections to the waterfront, the Mohawk Hudson trail, the proposed Patroon Creek Multi-use trail, and replacement of the Livingston Avenue Bridge.

BICYCLING

Cycling improves health, is used for commuting or recreation, and can have tourism benefits. The City of Albany's Bicycle Master Plan, completed in partnership with the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC), identifies a network of bicycle routes to improve cycling as a viable mode of transportation throughout the City. See Map 7 for a map of the city's Bicycle Master Plan.

Goal:

Provide for safe bicycle mobility throughout the City.

Strategies and Actions:

BIC-1 Promote and Implement the Bicycle Master Plan.

BIC-2 Connect to regional trails.

BIC-3 Educate cyclists and drivers.

RESEARCH: TRANSPORTATION ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT HOUSING PRODUCES LESS TRAFFIC THAN TRADITIONAL HOUSING.

The Transportation Cooperative Research Program, sponsored by the Federal Transit Administration, conducted a 2008 study into the “Effects of TOD on Housing, Parking, and Travel.” The report concludes that TOD apartments average around one-half the norm of vehicle trips per housing units. Actual rates varied from 70% to 90% lower for projects near downtowns, to 15% to 25% lower for TODs in low-density suburban areas.

The report suggests that, with lower levels of traffic generated, TOD can be encouraged in several ways: developers could be allowed to pay lower traffic related impact fees and reduce parking costs, making development more affordable; rightsizing parking ratios and traffic generation may encourage local acceptance of higher density development; and with lower levels of traffic, roadway improvements thought to be required could be reduced, saving money.

TCRP Report 128: Effects of TOD on Housing, Parking, and Travel. G.B. Arrington and Robert Cervero, Transportation Research Board, 2008.

BIC-1 Strategy: Promote and Implement the Bicycle Master Plan

The Bicycle Master Plan provides a vision of Albany as a “bikable” city and a plan to implement the vision. (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-2; Transportation MM-1, VEH-3; Natural Resources AQ-1; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3)

Actions:

- a. Work cooperatively with the CDTC, New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), Albany County, and neighboring communities to coordinate development and implementation of the bikeway network.
- b. Implement the Bicycle Master Plan. Key actions included in the plan include the following:
 - Encourage bicycle-friendly development by adopting site plan review criteria requiring bikeway routes, bike parking, and other end of trip facilities.
 - Develop bicycle infrastructure through design guidelines, implementing the bikeway network, signage, transit integration, and the development and implementation of a Complete Streets program.
 - Ensure maintenance of bikeways and develop standards for bikeway maintenance in construction zones.
 - Encourage cycling through transportation demand management¹⁰ initiatives, web based information, bike week/month campaigns, and providing bike parking at City events.
 - Fund a full or part-time cycling coordinator to work for the City of Albany.
 - Determine the feasibility of a citywide bike share program.
 - Develop metrics and assessment tools to track use of bicycle infrastructure.
 - Develop a webpage dedicated to bicycling in Albany, including the location of existing and future routes, as well as existing bicycle parking.

¹⁰ Transportation Demand Management (TDM) – TDM is a series of measures promoting alternatives to the single occupant vehicle for reducing traffic congestion. These measures include carpooling, vanpooling, transit, walking, bicycling, telecommuting, compressed work weeks, etc.

BIC-2 Strategy: Connect to regional trails.

As noted in the Pedestrian section above, the connection between trails is important for transportation mobility, as well as recreation and health purposes. (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-1; Transportation PED-2; Natural Resources OS-1; Institutions RP-2)

Actions:

- a. Work cooperatively with regional cycling organizations to support the development of new trails and greenways.
- b. Improve key connection points from the bicycle and pedestrian network to greenways including connections to the waterfront, to the Mohawk Hudson trail, the proposed Patroon Creek Multi-use trail, the proposed Albany County Rail Trail, and replacement of the Livingston Avenue Bridge.



In 2011, CDTA launched Bus Plus, the region's first bus rapid transit system, with its first line running between Albany and Schenectady.

BIC-3 Strategy: Educate Cyclists and Drivers (Interrelated Strategies: Transportation BIC-1)

The City should continue to work with the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) to build upon the cyclist and driver education campaign Capital Coexist (www.capitalcoexist.org).

Actions:

- a. Work with the CDTC to enhance and market the Capital Coexist bicycle/driver education campaign which provides bicycle educational material, safety tips and information on current bicycle projects and events.
- b. Develop and market educational materials about complete streets, cycling routes, street markings, and the specific rights and needs of cyclists in the City of Albany.

TRANSIT

Albany's transit services will provide an array of types of services, located throughout the City, to encourage and enable connections between neighborhoods, jobs, and other destinations. Both local and regional connections are currently being improved and re-structured by the CDTA, and these revamped services will support and encourage the needs and vision for transit in Albany. Albany's first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor opened for service in April 2011 on Central Avenue/Route 5, connecting the City of Albany to Schenectady. A second BRT route is being considered for the Washington or Western Avenue corridors from downtown Albany to Crossgates Mall.

Goal:

Increase transit options and transit use.

Strategies and Actions:

TR-1 Establish an intermodal transit center.

TR-2 Promote Transportation Demand Management to improve transit choices.

TR-3 Increase transit connectivity.

TR-4 Explore transit expansion options.

TR-1 Strategy: Establish an intermodal transit center. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form UD-3; Transportation TR-3, TR-4, AIR-1; Natural Resources AQ-1)

Establish an Intermodal Transit Center (regional / local bus service) with connections to the Rensselaer Amtrak Station and Albany International Airport.

Actions:

- a. Work cooperatively with CDTA, private bus operators, and other parties to develop a new Intermodal Transit Center in downtown Albany adjacent to the site of the proposed Convention Center.
- b. Design an Intermodal Transit Center using high quality urban design and planning principles that encourage mass transit use. This includes strong connections for walking between the Center and the downtown, appropriate transit-oriented land uses, adding bike connections and storage, and facilitating bus traffic so as to minimize the impact on nearby streets.
- c. Maximize the Intermodal Transit Center’s benefit to Downtown by increasing transit services through schedule changes, improved connections, and ensuring the safety and security of transit riders.



Installing electric and other alternative-fueled vehicle infrastructure will provide an economic boost and environmental benefits.

TR-2 Strategy: Promote Transportation Demand Management to improve transit choices. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-1, UD-1; Transportation VEH-3; Natural Resources AQ-1; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-2; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3)

Employ transportation demand management techniques to encourage the use of transit, including the use of incentives.

Actions:

- a. Work cooperatively with CDTA to improve transit service coverage, speed and frequency, extending hours of service where possible, and serving key destinations such as commercial centers, community facilities and employment centers.
- b. Support the development of transit services that encourage transit use through better linkages between jobs and residences, service at all times of day, and make travel from one place to another as easy as possible, therefore encouraging less driving.
- c. Create Transit Oriented Development (TOD) overlay districts along existing and proposed transit corridors (such as BRT routes) to encourage mixed use development with higher densities, reduced parking, and walkable streets. Work with community stakeholders to determine the appropriate density levels and mix of uses as well as appropriate locations for TOD.
- d. Promote reliability in transit services through coordination with service providers. Encourage published schedules, real time information, and other methods of communication with the transit riding public.
- e. Work with CDTA and CDTC to promote and advertise the use of transit, including new routes, financial incentives (such as free or reduced-rate bus passes), and the use of alternates to single-occupancy vehicle commuting through park-and-rides and BRT services.
- f. Evaluate, as part of the citywide parking strategy, incentivizing transit use through changes to parking fees that would encourage a shift from driving to riding transit.
- g. Work with CDTA to promote the Transportation Demand Management website.

TR-3 Strategy: Increase transit connectivity. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy EMP-1, INV-1; Social CHR-5, CHR-7; Transportation TR-1, AIR-1; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-2; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3)

Actions:

- a. Work cooperatively with the CDTA in their effort to restructure transit routes in Albany. Improve the North and South connections as well as loops within the city so residents can utilize the services in the city, especially employment centers, healthcare facilities, educational facilities, , recreational facilities, retail centers, etc.
- b. Improve the access to and attractiveness of bus transit facilities, including sidewalks, shelters, signage, etc.
- c. Ensure that all sidewalks and pedestrian access to transit facilities are fully accessible to persons with disabilities.

TR-4 Strategy: Explore transit expansion options. (Interrelated Strategies: Social SS-4; Transportation TR-1, TR-3; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3)

Explore the potential for expanded bus rapid transit (BRT) service and support the planning process for the implementation of high speed rail.

Actions:

- a. Support the operation of the Route 5 BusPlus, the CDTA's first BRT route, which provides service between Albany and Schenectady along Central Avenue. Significant improvement and investment in this corridor is programmed, including new vehicles, stations, park and ride lots, transit signal priority, and potentially off-board fare collection (CDTC TIP).
- b. Encourage the development of additional BusPlus routes throughout the City and to regional destinations, including along Western Avenue, as well as routes connecting the Albany, Schenectady, and Troy city centers.
- c. Provide adequate and efficient late-night transit between entertainment destinations, neighborhoods and educational institutions (e.g. late-night bus service, taxis and shuttles) to encourage alternatives to driving.
- d. Support the development and implementation of the federally-designated high speed rail Empire Corridor, extending from New York City to Albany to Buffalo, with the New York City to Albany route as a priority.
- e. Investigate potential opportunities for light rail connections to growing suburbs, city centers and regional activity centers. Explore funding sources and feasibility.
- f. Determine the feasibility of re-establishing streetcar lines along highly-travelled intra and inter-City routes.

The Northway Express, operated by CDTA, provides regional commuters with an alternative way to reach employment and activity centers in Albany.



VEHICULAR

While providing improved transportation modal choices is important, the efficient and safe flow of traffic is also crucial. Improvements in traffic circulation and access that increase safety, reduce congestion, rationalize parking, and upgrade and maintain roads within and to the City will make for a more livable Albany.

Goal:

Improve vehicular connections for automobiles, motorcycles, and scooters to and within Albany to facilitate circulation and reduce congestion, while addressing impacts on the City fabric.

Strategies and Actions:

VEH-1 Improve road infrastructure and reduce congestion.

VEH-2 Implement a comprehensive parking strategy.

VEH-3 Promote Transportation Demand Management to reduce vehicle miles traveled.

VEH-4 Promote efficient, hybrid, or alternative-fueled vehicles.

VEH-1 Strategy: Improve road infrastructure and reduce congestion. (Interrelated Strategies: Transportation VEH-3, TR-3, TR-4)

Implement roadway infrastructure and signalization improvements to increase efficiency and safety, reduce congestion and delays, and decrease idling and other vehicular-related pollution issues.

Actions:

- a. Develop and fund a maintenance program to preserve the infrastructure investments that have been made to roadways, and continue to plan for maintaining a state of good repair of all other roadways.
- b. Identify gaps or needs in the existing street network, such as the relative lack of major north-south connectivity, and establish a plan for future roadway development and connections.
- c. Optimize traffic flow and minimize congestion on arterial roadways through the use of management strategies, including:
 - Access management techniques on critical corridors to maintain capacity and safety. This includes limiting individual driveways, encouraging shared curb cuts, and potential use of medians or traffic engineering measures to control turning movements.
 - Intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and traffic signal optimization.
 - Alternative intersection design to increase mobility such as the use of roundabouts where appropriate.
- d. Connect neighborhood streets that today may not be connected, to facilitate circulation and minimize traffic congestion on collector roadways.
- e. Consider the use of a multi-modal level of service criterion that balances all transportation modes.
- f. Evaluate downtown access, circulation and congestion and develop a comprehensive and integrated plan that prioritizes streets by mode, reduces congestion and delay, and promotes the efficient use of downtown streets.
- g. Utilize green streets criteria for new and rehabilitation road projects.
- h. Investigate the benefit of utilizing heat resistant construction materials for pavement in preparation for climate change.

VEH-2 Strategy: Implement a comprehensive parking strategy. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-1; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-6)

Address all aspects of parking such as parking supply, demand and usage, as well as design. This would also include review and updates to City regulations regarding parking requirements and development, and possible changes to City zoning regulations for on-street parking management.

Actions:

- a. Complete a parking study of the City of Albany, including developing a compendium of parking policies (City, State, etc.), and completing a full assessment of existing parking supply, usage, and current and future demand. This study would inform the additional development of parking policies and potential for parking pricing strategies.
- b. Work cooperatively with the State of New York, the Albany Parking Authority and others to find opportunities for changes to State-employee parking policies that would better synchronize with City of Albany resident and visitor needs. Such changes could include fee structures, shared parking during off hours and incentives for transit use.
- c. As part of the complete parking study, review off-street parking standards and required ratios and consider the use of maximum parking requirements where other modes provide accessibility options, incentives for shared and/or off-site parking, and fees “in lieu of” on-site parking.
- d. Develop parking policies and standards that support and encourage the land use and community form desired by the City. This includes development of parking behind buildings, rather than between buildings and the street, structured parking when feasible, encouraging good parking lot/structure design, facilitating pedestrian access and improving traffic circulation.

With its new capacity to handle heavy lift cargo, the Port of Albany continues to distinguish itself as a major player in maritime commerce.



VEH-3 Strategy: Promote Transportation Demand Management to reduce vehicle miles traveled. (Interrelated Strategies: Transportation TR-2; Natural Resources AQ-1; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3)

Transportation demand management includes a variety of opportunities to reduce automobile use and vehicle miles traveled. Programs can include the encouraging of bicycling, carpooling, transit use, or telecommuting.

Actions:

- a. Promote public education and awareness programs about the availability and benefits of alternatives to automobile commuting.
- b. Promote CDTC's iPool2 carpooling system, to promote ridesharing.
- c. Work with CDTA and CDTC to encourage greater use of transportation demand management tools such as:
 - Employee subsidies to encourage employee ridesharing or transit use such as discounted transit passes.
 - Incentives to encourage telecommuting and flexible work hours.
 - Priority parking spaces or pricing in public parking garages for carpoolers.
 - Parking cash out program, where employers who provide subsidized parking for their employees offer a cash allowance or transit pass in lieu of a parking space.
- d. Explore the feasibility of a municipal car-sharing program within the City of Albany fleet to reduce the total number of vehicles required for City employees.
- e. Support the development of a car-sharing program for residents, as well as commuters, which will reduce local and regional VMT's and GHG emissions, and reduce parking demand.
- f. Support CDTA in the development of a Transportation Demand Management website for the Capital Region which will provide educational materials on TDM tools.

VEH-4 Strategy: Promote hybrid/electric, alternative-fueled, and efficient, vehicles. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form UD-3; Transportation MM-1; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-1)

The inclusion of fuel efficient, hybrid and alternative-fueled vehicles are a desired part of a sustainable transportation network in Albany.

Actions:

- a. Promote the use of alternative vehicles, where appropriate, in transportation plans, including facilities for plug-in electric vehicles on streets and in parking facilities.
- b. Encourage alternative vehicle use through programs such as priority parking.
- c. Develop a program within the City of Albany to share fleet vehicles and use electric, CNG, and hybrid vehicles.
- d. Encourage the use of hybrid or alternative-fueled buses, including CDTA fleet, school district buses, and other public fleets.
- e. Require electric vehicle and alternative-fueled vehicle infrastructure in the approval process for new projects that meet a minimum development threshold.
- f. Incorporate alternative-fueled vehicles into the city fleet.

FREIGHT MOVEMENT/PORT

The Port of Albany is a world-class facility and an economic engine for the region that employs hundreds of people. It receives 800,000 tons of cargo each year and was recently recognized as the most improved port in the nation for handling heavy lift cargo. In 2010, the Albany Port District Commission Master Plan for the Port of Albany was

Albany International Airport completed a multi-million dollar capital redevelopment project included a new 230,000 square foot terminal, parking garage, Air Traffic Control Tower, and cargo facility.



completed. The Master Plan study included a comprehensive review of the facilities of the Port of Albany, the markets it serves, and potential opportunities for future development at the Port, responsive to its mission, and based on the characteristics of the Port and its competitive position.

Goal:

Improve capacity and service at the Port of Albany and increase resilience to future climate change impacts.

Strategies and Actions:

FMP-1 Leverage port assets and integrate with freight rail.

FMP-2 Modernize the port to accommodate increased demand.

FMP-1 Strategy: Leverage port assets and integrate with freight rail. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-2; Transportation FMP-2)

Actions:

- a. Encourage land use support for development of major distribution facilities. This could include evaluating land uses near the port to preserve land and locations that are appropriate for the needs of freight distribution companies.
- b. Determine requirements and investments to maximize the use of rail operations in support of the Port, and examine potential for incentives that would encourage the use of freight rail rather than trucks.
- c. Encourage the use of City residents as a labor pool for port-related businesses and potential distribution facilities. Educating these businesses to the potential labor pool available in the City could assist in attracting or retaining port-related businesses.

FMP-2 Strategy: Modernize the port to accommodate increased demand.

(Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-2; Transportation FMP-1)

Continue to modernize and enhance the port to meet the needs of today and for growing future demand.

Actions:

- a. Support the implementation of the recommendations of Port Master Plan, including the potential increase in open storage space for project cargo, steel or other cargo. Alternatives for creating this space would include the current Cargill Salt leasehold and/or site 11 if the ethanol lease does not eventuate, or the current Hudson River Recycling (HRR) site.

- b. Monitor the effects of rail and truck traffic and work cooperatively to implement measures to minimize adverse impacts on the City's land uses and roadway network.
- c. Preserve industrial waterfront uses in the vicinity of the port to support future job growth and allow for future expansion if necessary.
- d. Support implementation of programmed CDTC TIP elements including security improvements, operational improvements and maintenance dredging, freight wharf and dock repairs, and the bio fuels transfer facility.
- e. Encourage the use of heat resistant construction materials for pavement and rail tracks in preparation for climate change.
- f. Consider and plan for the potential impacts of climate change, including sea level rise and extreme weather events..

AIR

Although not located within the City of Albany, Albany International Airport is an important component of the City's transportation network. The airport serves as a gateway to visitors and business interests. The airport is less than three miles from major City employment centers and global destinations such as CNSE's Albany Nano Tech Complex and Harriman Campus and is the closest airport to the rapidly expanding Global Foundries. Marketing the airport, and improving access to Downtown Albany are ways the City can contribute to the continued viability of the airport, attraction of new residents and employees as well as increase the number of visitors taking advantage of Albany's cultural and recreational opportunities.

Goal:

Maintain Albany Airport as a regional hub for air travel.

Strategies and Actions:

AIR-1 Support and improve connections between the airport and city.

AIR-2 Support efforts to increase national connections available through Albany International Airport

AIR-1 Strategy: Support and improve connections between the airport and city. (Inter-related Strategies: Economy INV-1; Transportation TR-1, TR-3)

Identify and improve key regional connections where needed

Actions:

- a. Facilitate connections between the city and the airport by encouraging the coordination of transportation services (transit and roadways), working with CTDA, NYSDOT, NYS Thruway Authority, and others.
- b. Market the airport as an asset to city businesses and tourism.

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- c. Establish a new Intermodal Transit Center in downtown Albany, incorporating direct, frequent and convenient access to the airport.

AIR-2 Strategy: Support Albany County Airport Authority efforts to increase direct national connections available through Albany International Airport (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-1)

Actions:

- a. Incorporate the airport's new Air Service Incentive Program, which provides financial incentives to attract new airlines and air service to Albany International Airport, in the city's branding and marketing strategies.





Albany’s land, water, vegetation, and air perform essential functions and provide vital benefits for the City and its residents. At a “mega-regional” scale, Albany is located in the Lower Hudson Watershed, which makes up about 40% of the Hudson/Mohawk River Basin, one of the largest drainage areas on the eastern seaboard of the United States. The Hudson River and its tributaries are Albany’s major natural features and have shaped its identity and sense of place throughout its history. However, today the downtown and other parts of Albany are cut off from the riverfront by I-787. While Albany’s water and other natural resources have been extensively altered by development, opportunities exist to forge a greener, more sustainable future by reintegrating them into the urban fabric.

Open since 2002, with easy access provided by the Hudson River Way Pedestrian Bridge, Albany Riverfront Park is home to an amphitheater with performance space and seating for more than 1,000 spectators, a new bulkhead, floating boat docks, and a bicycle path for recreation.

3.5 Natural Resources

Key natural resource system components include waterways, the urban forest, natural habitat, air quality, topography and soils, and open space. See Map 8 for a map of Albany's natural resources.



Natural Resources Key Issues

WATERWAYS

The City of Albany is located along the western edge of the Hudson River within the Lower Hudson Watershed. In addition to the Hudson River, surface waters include Patroon Creek, Normans Kill, Rensselaer Lake, and Tivoli Lakes. Albany's hydrology has been highly modified by development, with many stream systems buried and incorporated into the City's combined sewer system as the City grew.

Goal:

Preserve and protect the City's waterways.

Strategies and Actions:

WW-1 Implement Long-Term Control Plan to mitigate water quality impacts of CSO's.

WW-2 Control sources of negative environmental impact.

WW-3 Use zoning and environmental review to protect river and stream corridors.

WW-4 Remediate brownfields to reduce runoff and water table contamination.

WW-5 Improve public access to waterways.

WW-6 Encourage water conservation.

WW-1 Strategy: Implement Long-Term Control Plan to mitigate water quality impacts of CSO's. (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources WW-2; Utilities and Infrastructure WS-1, SW-1, SW-2)

Develop and implement a Long-Term Control Plan (currently in progress)¹¹ to mitigate the water quality impacts of combined sanitary and storm sewers overflows (CSOs) into the Hudson River. (Interrelated Strategies: Utilities and Infrastructure WS-1, SW-2 a.)

Actions:

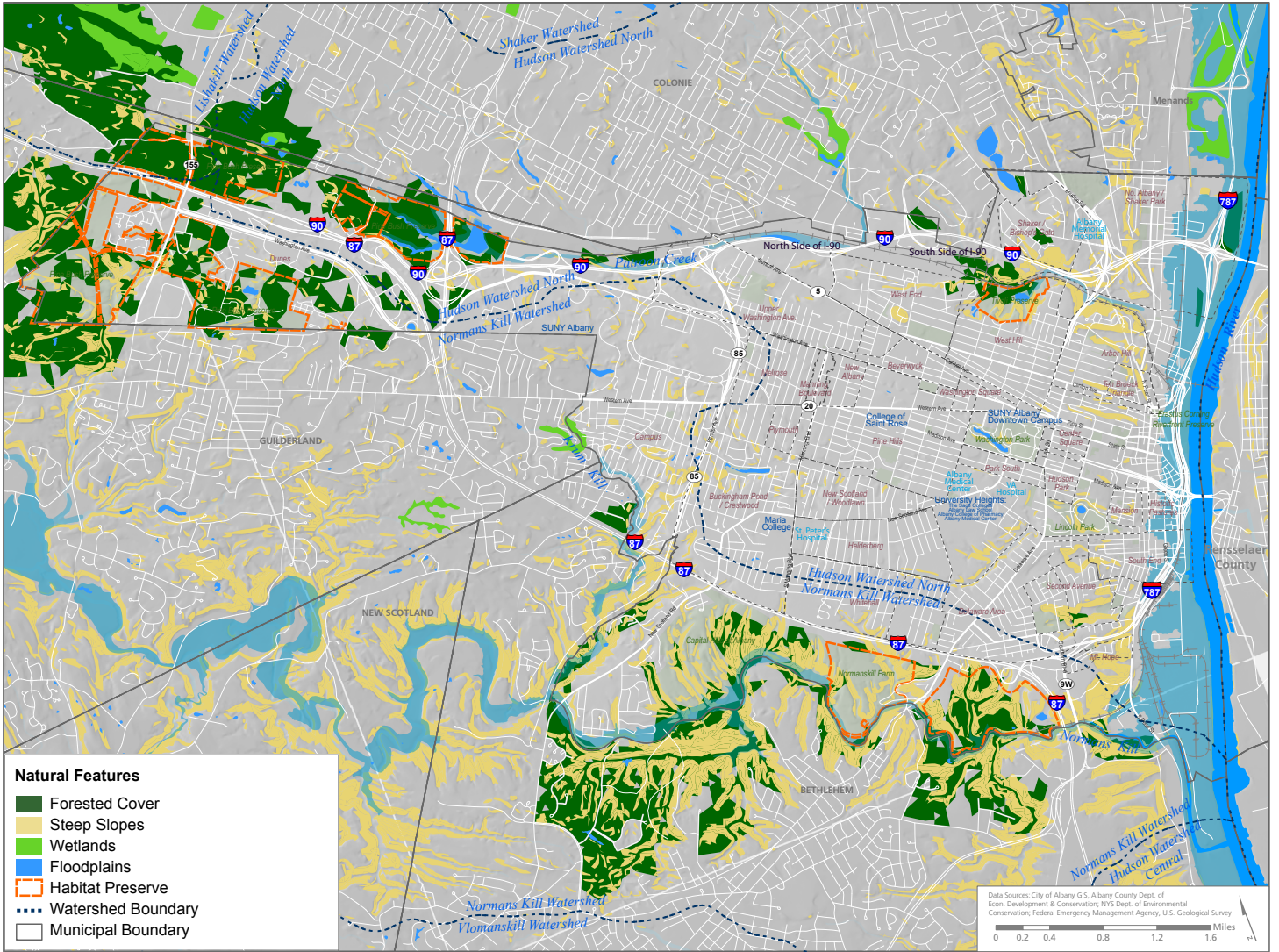
- a. Implement New York State Best Management Practices (BMPs) for combined sanitary and storm sewers. Include BMPs that reduce stormwater runoff, restore wetlands, improve riparian corridors, and reduce costs associated with CSO solutions.
- b. Implement phased strategies to reduce stormwater runoff, which will mitigate impacts of CSOs, to comply with New York State water quality standards, and Clean Water Act requirements. Potential strategies include new street trees, underground cisterns, green roofs, and rainwater capture and reuse.

- The shoreline of the Hudson River has been altered so that most natural habitat has been heavily impacted. However, the Hudson River is an important habitat for fish (e.g., Striped Bass, American Shad, and the federally endangered Shortnose Sturgeon).
- Many of the City's streams have been culverted and are now part of the City's combined sewer system. In addition, the majority of wetlands have been filled so that few remain.
- Erosion and stormwater runoff are concerns, especially during heavy rainstorms. The City does not have a slope ordinance for construction.
- The Albany Pine Bush Preserve is a globally rare ecosystem containing over 45 species of greatest conservation need. While most of the natural Albany Pine Bush left in city borders is in conservation ownership and management, there are several small important parcels recommended for protection.

List continues on page 119

¹¹ The Albany Pool Communities - the City of Albany, City of Cohoes, Village of Green Island, City of Rensselaer, City of Troy, and City of Watervliet - are preparing a Combined Sewer Overflow Long Term Control Plan.

Map 8 Natural Features



Community Form
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WW-2 Strategy: Control sources of negative environmental impact (e.g., construction runoff, illicit discharges, nonpoint source pollutants, etc.) that make the city's waterways too polluted for swimming. (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources WW-1, WW-3, TS-1; Utilities and Infrastructure SW-1, WS-3)

Actions:

- a. Strengthen development standards to minimize site disturbance during construction near sensitive environmental areas such as waterways, steep slopes, and natural habitat. In general, Albany's waterways are located in highly developed areas where urban runoff from construction, past and current industrial activities, residential and commercial development, and golf courses are a concern.
- b. Partner with parks and recreation providers (e.g., Albany Department of Recreation, golf courses, universities, and public schools) to reduce use of potentially harmful chemical fertilizers near waterways and reduce stormwater runoff into waterways.
- c. Work toward retrofitting existing impervious surfaces, utilizing green infrastructure to reduce runoff, improve water quality and reduce other negative environmental impacts.

WW-3 Strategy: Use zoning and environmental review as a tool to protect river and stream corridors. (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources WW-2, TS-1; Utilities and Infrastructure SW-3, SW-4)

Actions:

- a. Enforce the Stormwater Management and Erosion Control section of the Albany code (§133-100) which requires a stormwater pollution plan (including means of controlling erosion from construction) for all activities subject to subdivision and/or site plan review.
- b. Require native vegetation to be planted in landscape buffers and setbacks from river and stream corridors.
- c. Continue to use the site plan review process to review proposed developments for any potential impacts on river and stream corridors.

- Landfill operations and large-scale commercial development have affected the Albany Pine Bush Preserve. There are concerns about encroachments into the Preserve and the need for better multi-modal transportation access.
- Air quality standards (e.g., sulfur dioxide emissions, inhalable particulates, carbon monoxide emissions, and ozone levels) are in compliance with State and Federal Air Quality Standards for 2007. Measures of healthy air quality have remained stable or improved over the last ten years.
- Albany has a diverse collection of open spaces and natural resources areas. There is, however, a need to improve connections and linkages to open space.

BROWNFIELD OPPORTUNITY AREAS

The seven Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOAs) depicted on Map 9 were selected from an inventory of approximately 15 potential brownfield sites in the City of Albany for the NYS Department of State's Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program. Criterion used to select the seven BOAs is based primarily on the sites' ability to achieve the State's "key outcomes" for the program:

- Effective strategies to achieve revitalization
- Informing site clean-ups to better understand contamination issues and clean-up options
- Sites that are ripe for redevelopment and investment
- Priorities for public and private investment are established that lead to community renewal
- Environmental justice issues related to negative environmental consequences are addressed
- Marketing - Marketing materials are generated to attract investors.
- Multi-agency and private-sector partnerships are established to leverage investments

To this end, the seven BOAs were identified as having the highest potential for meeting the key outcomes due to the redevelopment potential of sites with many underutilized and/or vacant parcels and potential for environmental improvement of sites with high levels of possible contamination from past use.

Central Warehouse, a former cold-storage facility, has been vacant for more than 20 years and poses a barrier to redevelopment north of Downtown.

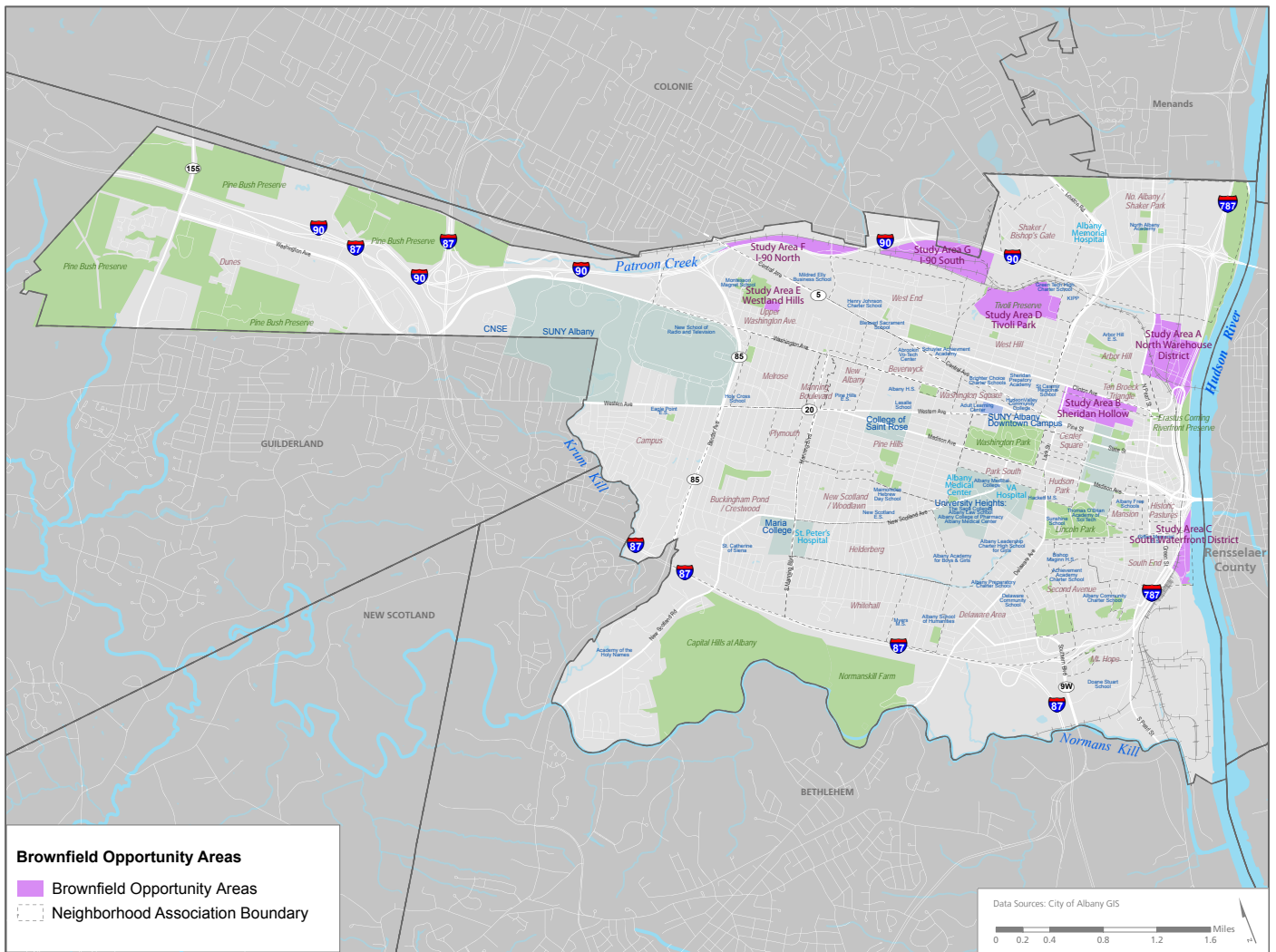
WW-4 Strategy: Remediate brownfields to reduce runoff and water table contamination. See Map 9 and refer to Appendix A for more information on potential Brownfield Opportunity Areas in Albany. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-4, ARCH-3; Economy INV-1; Natural Resources TS-2)

Actions:

- a. Create a GIS database of potential and existing brownfield sites using vacancy and land use data and use the results of the New York State Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Pre-Nomination Study to move through the state process.
- b. Target priority brownfield sites (e.g., sites located near waterways or with the potential for groundwater contamination) for state grant applications through the New York State Environmental Restoration Fund as future funding becomes available for remediation. Contaminants found on former industrial or other brownfield sites have the potential to create hazardous runoff that enters nearby waterways or seep into groundwater.
- c. Develop public-private partnerships to explore creative financing techniques for brownfield remediation.



Map 9 Brownfield Opportunity Areas



Areas identified as potential opportunities for the redevelopment of underutilized properties. Areas have been identified in conjunction with the New York State Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program.

BEST PRACTICES: NEW YORK BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPS) FOR COMBINED SEWER SYSTEMS.

The state's 15 BMPs are designed to use the existing treatment facility and collection system to the extent possible and minimize water quality impacts from CSOs. Planning for preservation of natural features (e.g., landscape buffers, reduction of clearing and grading) and conservation design are strategies included in the New York State Stormwater Design Manual:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/29072.html>

BEST PRACTICES: GREYWATER REUSE

According to the National Association of Homebuilders, Greywater accounts for 60% of the outflow produced in homes. It contains little or no pathogens and can be recycled for non-potable uses such as irrigation, flushing toilets, and car washing. In addition to reducing water use, when planned into new residential construction, the home's wastewater treatment system can be significantly reduced, resulting in cost and space savings.

WW-5 Strategy: Improve public access to waterways. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form UD-2; Economy INV-2; Transportation MM-2)

Actions:

- a. Develop and improve existing pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Corning Preserve and the Mohawk-Hudson Bike Trail from Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods (e.g., Broadway, Colonie Street). Ensure that Albany's waterfront is linked to the future convention center site.
- b. Improve bicycle and pedestrian signage directing residents and visitors to the Mohawk-Hudson Bike Trail.
- c. Target key redevelopment sites along the Hudson River, north and south of the Corning Preserve, that provide the opportunity for public use of the waterfront and the river and seek out public-private partnerships to assist in developing public access at these sites.
- d. Create multi-use trails within the proposed Normans Kill and Patroon Creek greenways.
- e. Develop marketing materials promoting the City's waterways, greenways, and pedestrian and bicycle trails.
- f. Investigate potential of daylighting waterways that are currently culverted.
- g. Identify barriers to recreational boating and swimming access in the Hudson River.

WW-6 Strategy: Encourage water conservation. (Interrelated Strategies: Utilities and Infrastructure EN-2, EN-4, WS-2)

Actions:

- a. Set city-wide department targets for reducing water use in public facilities and buildings.
- b. Partner with public schools, universities, other institutions, and businesses to reduce water use through conservation measures (e.g., reducing the need for landscape watering through native landscaping or rain gardens, replacing older toilets and bathroom fixtures to improve efficiency).

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Albany's Tivoli Preserve is the second largest urban nature preserve in New York State.

- c. Revise building codes to allow the use of greywater recycling systems (i.e., untreated household wastewater from showers, bathroom sinks, washing machines) for irrigation and other non-potable uses.
- d. Develop a marketing campaign and/or incentives to encourage residents to reduce water consumption, install high-efficiency fixtures and appliances, and shift high water use activities (e.g., washing clothes, dishwashing) to non-peak hours.

URBAN FOREST

Albany's urban forest refers to the trees and associated living organisms that grow within the City, including those located within nature preserves, backyards, parks, and along city streets. The preservation and growth of the city's urban forest provides a number of benefits, including improved air and water quality, carbon sequestration, shading and cooling, improved property values, and reduced urban heat island effect.

Goal:

Protect and enhance the City's urban forest, including nature preserves, parks, open space, street trees, and trees planted on private property.

Strategies and Actions:

UF-1 Develop a comprehensive forestry program.

UF-2 Use zoning and environmental review to protect the urban forest.

BEST PRACTICES: WATER CONSERVATION, AUSTIN, TEXAS

The City of Austin, Texas has set aggressive goals for reducing per-capita and overall water use citywide (e.g., government offices, residences, and businesses). Austin's top water conservation successes, in order of estimated savings are lawn watering restrictions, reclaimed water use, utility water rates structuring, reducing water losses in the City's infrastructure, and a mandatory toilet retrofit program.

BEST PRACTICES: ITHACA TREE WORKS AND CITIZEN PRUNERS PROGRAMS, ITHACA, NY.

The City of Ithaca has a long tradition of supporting urban forestry and has been named a “Tree City USA” for the last ten years. Ithaca adopted a master plan that envisions an improved urban forest by 2015 through the use of best practice forestry techniques (e.g., tree inventories), research in bare-roots tree planting to lower costs, and volunteers to help maintain and improve the urban forest.

Ithaca Tree Works is a volunteer-based bare root tree planting initiative involving a cooperative effort between Cornell University’s Urban Horticulture Institute and the City of Ithaca Parks and Forestry department. Ithaca’s volunteer Citizen Pruner program is a unique partnership between the City, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Cornell University. Volunteers complete a training course and commit to about 6 hours a month for at least one growing season. They assist the City Forester with maintaining public trees, shrubs, and other landscape beautification projects.

http://www.ci.ithaca.ny.us/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={3B881805-DA8B-4AE7-B4EB-0BBDFFBB26E5}

⁷ i-Tree is a USDA software that allows municipalities to better quantify the benefits of trees. It provides baseline data that can be used demonstrate value and set priorities for decision-making.

UF-1 Strategy: Develop and implement a comprehensive urban forestry program to increase and maintain the health of Albany’s urban tree canopy. (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources UF-2, AQ-2)

Actions:

- Measure the existing tree canopy, quantify its current CO₂ sink capacity as a means of climate change mitigation, and set a canopy coverage goal for the next ten years.
- Update the Urban Forest Management Plan to include best practices for increasing and maintaining the City’s urban tree canopy, including replacing aging and diseased trees, managing existing tree inventory in relation to pests and diseases, and planting species resistant to pests and disease, and are low-pollen producers. Consider i-Tree or other tools to build capacity for urban forest assessment and management⁷.
- Set targets for planting trees in parks, along streets, and in sensitive environmental areas (e.g., riparian corridors and areas with steep slopes) based on the existing inventory.
- Partner with community garden groups and others interested in neighborhood greening to increase participation in Albany’s Street Tree Planting Program.
- Develop a tree maintenance program that utilizes volunteer services in partnership with universities, Capital District Community Gardens (CDCG), and/or other neighborhood groups. The program could be modeled after Ithaca’s volunteer Citizen Pruner program, which provides free training to volunteers in exchange for a commitment to assist the City Forester with maintaining trees and other special projects throughout the City.



Corning Preserve provides a variety of habitat types including man-made tidal ponds.

- f. Partner with institutions (e.g., universities, hospitals, state government) and public schools to increase the tree canopy on large, urban campuses and reduce stormwater runoff.
- g. Quantify and disseminate information on the benefits of the urban forest and best practices for planting and maintenance. For example, shading from trees reduces the urban heat island impact, cooling demands, and heat related illnesses.
- h. Identify neighborhoods vulnerable to the heat-related impacts of climate change and assess existing and needed street tree coverage.

UF-2 Strategy: Use zoning and environmental review as a tool to protect the urban forest. (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources UF-1, AQ-2)

Actions:

- a. Adopt a tree preservation/landscape ordinance that limits disturbance to existing trees and vegetation, requires replacement of trees above a specified size that are removed (e.g., equal caliper inch replacement), and includes provisions requiring native trees and plants be retained in sensitive environmental areas (e.g., Pine Bush Preserve, floodplains, steep slopes).
- b. Develop a new landscape standards ordinance requiring new trees, appropriate landscape materials and the avoidance of invasive plant species.

NATURAL HABITAT

Albany's natural habitat areas support native or indigenous species of animals, plants or other type of organisms. The Albany Pine Bush Preserve, Corning Preserve, and Tivoli Preserve are examples of natural habitat areas within the City's boundaries.

Goal:

Protect, enhance, restore, and expand the City's natural habitat areas (e.g., Albany Pine Bush Preserve, Corning Preserve, Tivoli Preserve).

Strategies and Actions:

- NH-1 Implement the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Management Plan.
- NH-2 Limit encroachment into habitat areas through land use controls.
- NH-3 Restore and maintain high quality natural habitat areas.
- NH-4 Use existing environmental education centers to promote habitat protection.

The Albany Pine Bush Preserve is one of the best remaining examples of an inland pine barrens ecosystem in the world and is home to a unique diversity of animals and plants, including 20 rare species and two rare natural communities.



NH-1 Work with the Albany Pine Bush Commission to support and implement the recommendations of the 2010 Management Plan/ Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Albany Pine Bush Preserve. Particular recommendations that the city can directly support include: (Interrelated Strategies: Transportation BIC-2, PED-2; Natural Resources NH-2, OS-1; Institutions RP-2)

- a. Provide numerous mechanisms for information exchange, particularly between the Commission, the general public, area school districts, local governments, local fire districts, and adjacent private landowners.
- b. Continue encouraging public actions that benefit Preserve protection and management (e.g. use of native plants in landscaping).
- c. Continue partnering with the APB Commission and the towns of Guilderland and Colonie to advance appropriate public use of, and access to, the Preserve and support for the Preserve's goals.
- d. Continue to explore the feasibility of linking the Albany Pine Bush Preserve with other formal paths and trails within the regional context through partnerships and/or access agreements with municipalities, institutions, and private businesses adjacent to the Preserve in areas where public access is desirable, but not currently available.

- e. Support the recommendations for areas designated for full protection, partial protection, and open space. Work with the APB Commission, county, and towns to review development proposals for property within these areas to ensure that development will not have a direct adverse impact on the Albany Pine Bush Preserve.

NH-2 Strategy: Limit encroachment into habitat areas through land use controls. (Inter-related Strategies: Natural Resources NH-1, NH-3, NH-4)

Actions:

- a. Continue to use the LC Land Conservation Zoning District to designate nature preserves, parks and recreation areas, and wildlife sanctuaries.
- b. Revise the City's Site Plan review standards to require a landscape buffer and building setback for properties adjacent to properties in the LC Land Conservation District.
- c. Include clear guidelines for applicants and the Planning Board to protect natural habitats.



The Pine Bush Discovery Center offers activities to teach visitors about the Preserve's natural and cultural history and provides many recreational and volunteer opportunities.

NH-3 Strategy: Restore and maintain high quality natural habitat areas. (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources NH-1, NH-2, OS-1)

Actions:

- a. Partner with community stakeholders, non-profit environmental groups, and businesses to encourage participation in ecological management and restoration activities on city lands (e.g., removal of invasive species, clean-up days, replanting native species, steep slope stabilization).
- b. Continue to work with preservation/neighborhood groups such as Inner City Outings, Arbor Hill Environmental Justice Corporation, and other groups to clean up and revitalize the Tivoli Preserve.
- c. Investigate the potential of utilizing wetlands mitigation and violation banking as a mechanism to fund waterfront and estuary projects.
- d. Plan for the potential impacts of climate change on the City's natural habitat areas, including an increase in invasive species and a potential shift in biotic communities .

NH-4 Strategy: Use the Pine Bush Discovery Center and the W. Haywood Burns Environmental Education Center as resources for promoting habitat protection. (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources NH-2)

Actions:

- a. Continue to promote and expand the use of educational programming and special events (e.g., land preservation fundraising events, educational events) at the LEED-Gold Certified Pine Bush Discovery Center. Educational events can raise awareness of the sustainable building techniques used in the design of the building itself and the benefits and opportunities for increased habitat protection. In addition, consider renting out the facility for special events in an effort to increase fundraising for habitat protection.
- b. Develop a master plan for the Tivoli Preserve for its long-term use as an outdoor environmental preserve classroom and green job training center, as recommended in the Albany NY SDAT Report. Include a strategy for ongoing maintenance that involves residents, schools, and nearby institutions to ultimately reverse the problems the Tivoli Preserve has faced over the years, such as flooding, illegal dumping and public safety issues, and integrate it into the larger Patroon Greenway and Regional Open Space Plan.
- c. Participate in marketing efforts (e.g., promotion on the City's website, social media sites) to raise awareness of the City's nature preserves and volunteer opportunities at Albany's nature preserves.

BEST PRACTICES: BROWNFIELD CLEANUP USING BIOREMEDIATION OR PHYTOREMEDIATION.

Bioremediation is a process encouraged by the U.S. EPA to remove contaminants in soil, sediment, and groundwater. This process involves either placing amendments into the soil (e.g., oxygen, carbon-rich vegetable oil, molasses) or transferring the soil for treatment at another location. A similar process, phytoremediation uses plants to remove contaminants in soil, sediment, surface water, and ground water.

www.cluin.org/greenremediation/
www-proxy.engg.ksu.edu/chsr/outreach/resources/

AIR QUALITY

Air quality is closely linked to human health and rates of disease and respiratory infections. According to the EPA, most declines in air quality can be linked back to point sources (e.g., industrial facilities), transportation sources (e.g., automobiles), and natural sources (e.g., wildfires). Albany is currently in compliance with State and Federal Air Quality Standards for 2007.

Goal:

Maintain and improve the air quality in the City of Albany.

Strategies and Actions:

AQ-1 Provide multi-modal transportation choices to reduce vehicle miles traveled.

AQ-2 Enhance the urban forest to absorb CO2 and other pollutants.

AQ-3 Enforce existing Anti-Idling Policy and expand to cover all modes and sectors

AQ-1 Strategy: Provide multi-modal transportation choices to reduce automobile use, vehicle miles traveled, and emissions. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-2, UD-1; Economy INV-1; Social CHR-2; Transportation MM-1, MM-2, BIC-1, TR-1, TR-2, VEH-3; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-1, NS-2; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3)

Actions:

- a. Work with the Capital District Transit Authority to study the potential of a transit center located in downtown near the proposed convention center.
- b. Provide incentives for Transit Oriented Development at potential transit center sites and existing hubs.
- c. Implement the Albany Bicycle Master Plan to increase the number of bicycle routes and signage to encourage residents to safely commute by bicycle.
- d. Encourage car-sharing and carpooling programs to reduce the number of people who drive alone to work and reduce parking demand.

AQ-2 Strategy: Enhance the urban forest to absorb CO₂ and other pollutants. (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources UF-1, UF-2).

- a. Measure the existing tree canopy, quantify its current CO₂ sink capacity as a means of climate change mitigation, and set a canopy coverage goal for the next ten years.
- b. Update the Urban Forest Management Plan to include best practices for increasing and maintaining the City's urban tree canopy.
- c. Set targets for planting trees in parks, along streets, and in sensitive environmental areas (e.g., riparian corridors and areas with steep slopes) based on the existing inventory.
- d. Partner with community garden groups and others interested in neighborhood greening to increase participation in Albany's Street Tree Planting Program.
- e. Develop a tree maintenance program that utilizes volunteer services in partnership with universities, Capital District Community Gardens (CDCG), and/or other neighborhood groups.
- f. Partner with institutions (e.g., universities, hospitals, state government) and public schools to increase the tree canopy on large, urban campuses and reduce stormwater runoff.
- g. Quantify and disseminate information on the benefits of the urban forest and best practices for planting and maintenance. For example, shading from trees reduces the urban heat island impact, cooling demands, and heat related illnesses.
- h. Identify neighborhoods vulnerable to the heat-related impacts of climate change and assess existing and needed street tree coverage.

AQ-3 Strategy: Enforce existing Anti-Idling Policy and expand to cover all modes and sectors. (Interrelated Strategies: Transportation VEH-3, VEH-4).

- a. Coordinate with city departments to ensure that the policy is being enforced for all city fleet vehicles.
- b. Work with CDTA, the Albany School District, colleges and universities, and other institutions with vehicle and bus fleets to establish an anti-idling policy for their vehicles.
- c. Explore the potential for developing and implementing a citywide anti-idling policy to include private vehicles.

TOPOGRAPHY AND SOILS

Healthy soils support Albany's urban forest, opportunities for urban agriculture, clean waterways, and quality plant, animal, and human habitat. Albany's soils have been heavily impacted by urban development. Their health is dependent on a number of factors, such as tree preservation, steep slope preservation, reductions in impervious surfaces, and protection from stormwater runoff.

Goal:

Protect steep slopes and soils from development encroachment, erosion, and contamination.

Strategies and Actions:

TS-1 Limit encroachment on steep slopes through land use controls.

TS-2 Encourage brownfield redevelopment to reduce soil contamination.

TS-1 Strategy: Limit encroachment on steep slopes through land use controls. (Interrelated Strategies: Utilities and Infrastructure SW-3, SW-4).

Actions:

- a. Adopt a steep slope ordinance to limit development and construction on slopes over a certain percentage (e.g., greater than 15%) in areas such as Normans Kill.

TS-2 Strategy: Encourage brownfield redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and infill development to improve soil quality, reduce contamination, and limit encroachment on steep slopes. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-4, ARCH-3; Economy INV-1; Natural Resources WW-4)

Actions:

- a. Partner with universities to study the potential for innovative brownfield clean up techniques (e.g., bioremediation, phytoremediation) and encourage their use to improve soil quality in order to facilitate site reuse.
- b. Provide incentives (e.g., matching grants, design assistance, technical assistance) to encourage brownfield redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and infill development.

BEST PRACTICES: HOMEGROWN MINNEAPOLIS – MINNEAPOLIS, MN

In 2008, the City of Minneapolis initiated Homegrown Minneapolis, an effort to improve the growth, sales, distribution, and consumption of healthy, locally grown foods within the city. Homegrown Minneapolis brought together key partners from local government, area businesses, community organizations, non-profits, and residents to make recommendations and pursue policies to create a healthy, local food system.

One of the actions for the Homegrown Task Force and City departments to pursue was the development of “a city-wide topical plan on community gardens and urban agriculture”. This plan will also serve as mechanism for implementing some of the many policies related developing a healthy community, as outlined in the Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth, the comprehensive plan for the City.

The Homegrown Minneapolis report can be found at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/homegrown-home.asp

OPEN SPACE

Open space includes parks and preserves, greenways, trails, and open space corridors along the City’s waterways. Open space supports the region’s natural resources systems, encourages healthier communities through opportunities for walking and other types of recreation, improves quality of life, and is a key part of attracting and retaining new residents and businesses.

Goal:

Protect and enhance the City’s open space network.

Strategies and Actions:

OS-1 Expand and connect greenways and trails and link to regional networks.

OS-2 Reclaim vacant lots as open space and community gardens.

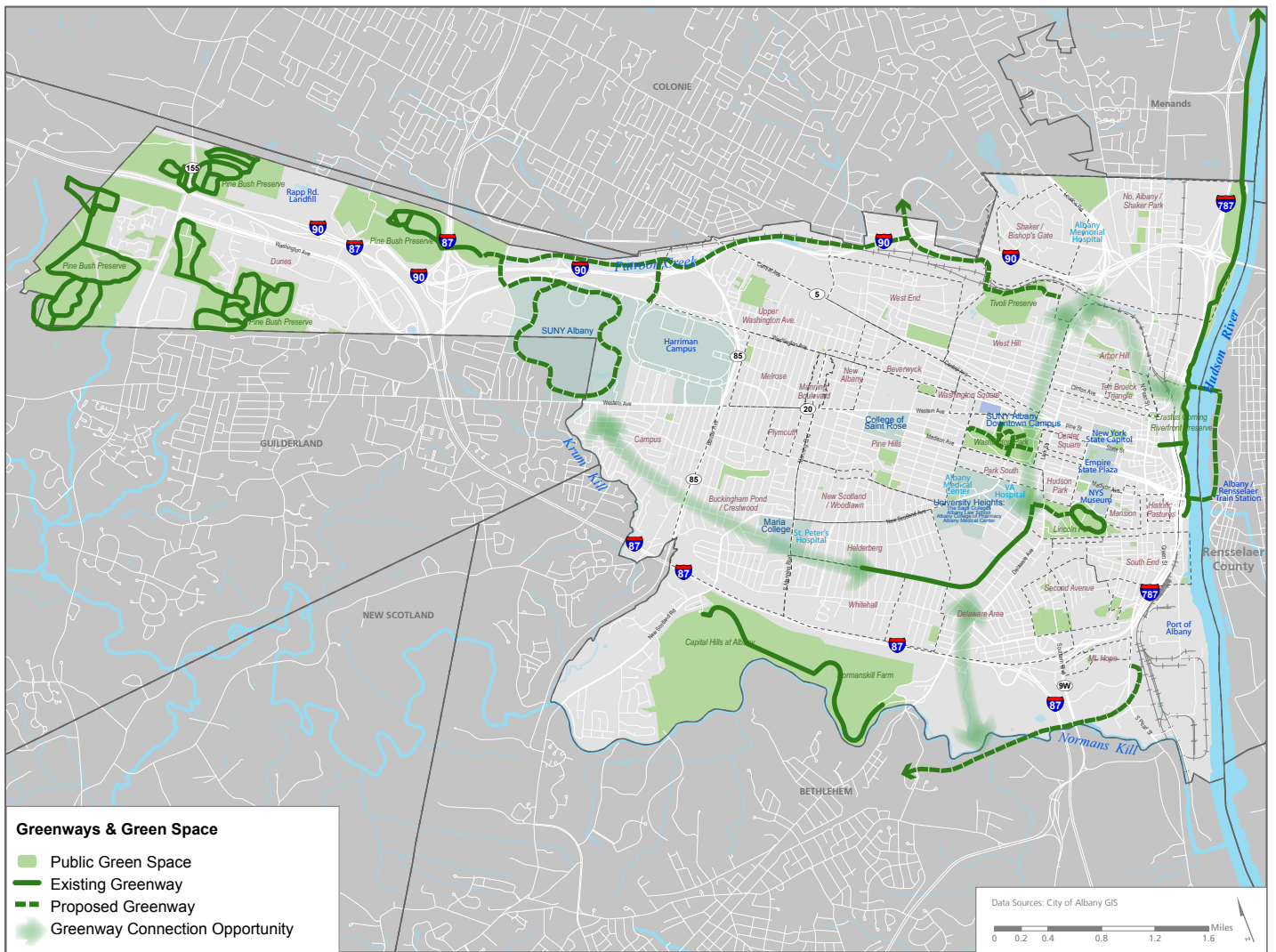
OS-3 Support local food production.

OS-1 Strategy: Expand and connect greenways and trails throughout the City and link to regional networks. See Map 10 for a map of greenways and potential connections. (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-1, CHR-7; Transportation BIC-2, PED-2; Natural Resources NH-1; Institutions RP-2)

Actions:

- a. Work with neighboring municipalities to develop a regional open space plan that includes greenways and trails to link open spaces throughout the region.
- b. Prioritize the development of new trails, bicycle, and sidewalk networks that connect Downtown Albany and its neighborhoods with existing parks and open spaces.
- c. Create an “emerald necklace” of open spaces along Albany’s southern boundary by improving pedestrian and bicycle access between existing open spaces and targeting key sites for open space acquisition. Access to Normanskill Farm, the Albany Municipal Golf Course, and the cemetery are generally interrupted by I-87 and I-787. The proposed Albany County Rail Trail is an example of a potential multi-use trail in this area that would help to improve pedestrian access to open space.
- d. Develop a coordinated citywide signage and/or streetscape plan to direct residents and visitors to public open space areas, including the riverfront, trails, bikeways, parks and preserves raising awareness of and linking existing amenities.

Map 10 Greenways & Open Space Connections



OS-2 Strategy: Continue to reclaim vacant lots as open space and community gardens. (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-3; Natural Resources OS-3; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-3)

Actions:

- a. Work with groups such as Capital District Community Gardens (CDCG) to encourage innovative reuse of vacant properties (e.g., urban agriculture and community gardens).
- b. Partner with neighborhood groups to develop vacant lots as small neighborhood pocket parks and shaded open space areas through initiatives such as the Vacant Lot Beautification Program.
- c. Continue implementing the City of Albany's Vacant Lot Stabilization Program.

OS-3 Strategy: Support local food production as a means of economic development and local food security. (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-3; Natural Resources OS-2; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-3, NS-7)

Actions:

- a. Promote and incentivize community gardens, rooftop gardens, farmers markets, and urban farms.
- b. Increase access to local farmers markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and increase participation by farmers through a year-round marketing campaign.
- c. Develop a partnership between farmers markets and institutions (e.g., Albany School District, hospitals, and universities) where institutions agree to purchase local products to support regional agriculture.
- d. Develop an Urban Agricultural Plan to support efforts to grow and consume more fresh, sustainably produced, and locally grown foods within the city, increasing community health, economic diversity, and local food security.
- e. Develop an urban farm demonstration project.

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NO DOGS
YOU MUST
Clean Up After
Your Dog
No. FREE 311
434-6050

Creating safe, livable, mixed-use, and mixed-income neighborhoods emerged from the Albany 2030 visioning process as the top community priority. The physical character of Albany's neighborhoods is largely defined by their housing stock, which are also critical to the well being of residents. The age of the housing stock contributes to the City's walkable, historic urban fabric but poses issues regarding building condition and adaptability to contemporary lifestyles and market demand. Moreover, the quality of Albany's neighborhoods varies from stable to needing reinvestment as measured by vacancy rate, poverty status, and homeownership rate.

Due to its history and development pattern, Albany has an eclectic mix of housing options from historic row houses and bungalows to modern split levels and colonials.



3.6 Housing and Neighborhoods

See Map 11 for a map of Albany's neighborhoods.

Key housing and neighborhood system components include housing diversity and choice, neighborhood identity, and neighborhood services.



HOUSING DIVERSITY AND CHOICE

Retaining current and attracting new residents to Albany depends on the availability of quality housing choices that meets the needs of residents at different income levels and at different stages in their lifecycles. A diverse housing stock will allow residents to continue to live in Albany as their needs change and will also make the City more competitive in the regional housing market.

Goals:

Provide a range of decent, affordable housing choices, densities, ownership opportunities, and price ranges to accommodate the housing needs of existing and new residents.

Maintain the supply of quality affordable housing while encouraging mixed-income neighborhoods.

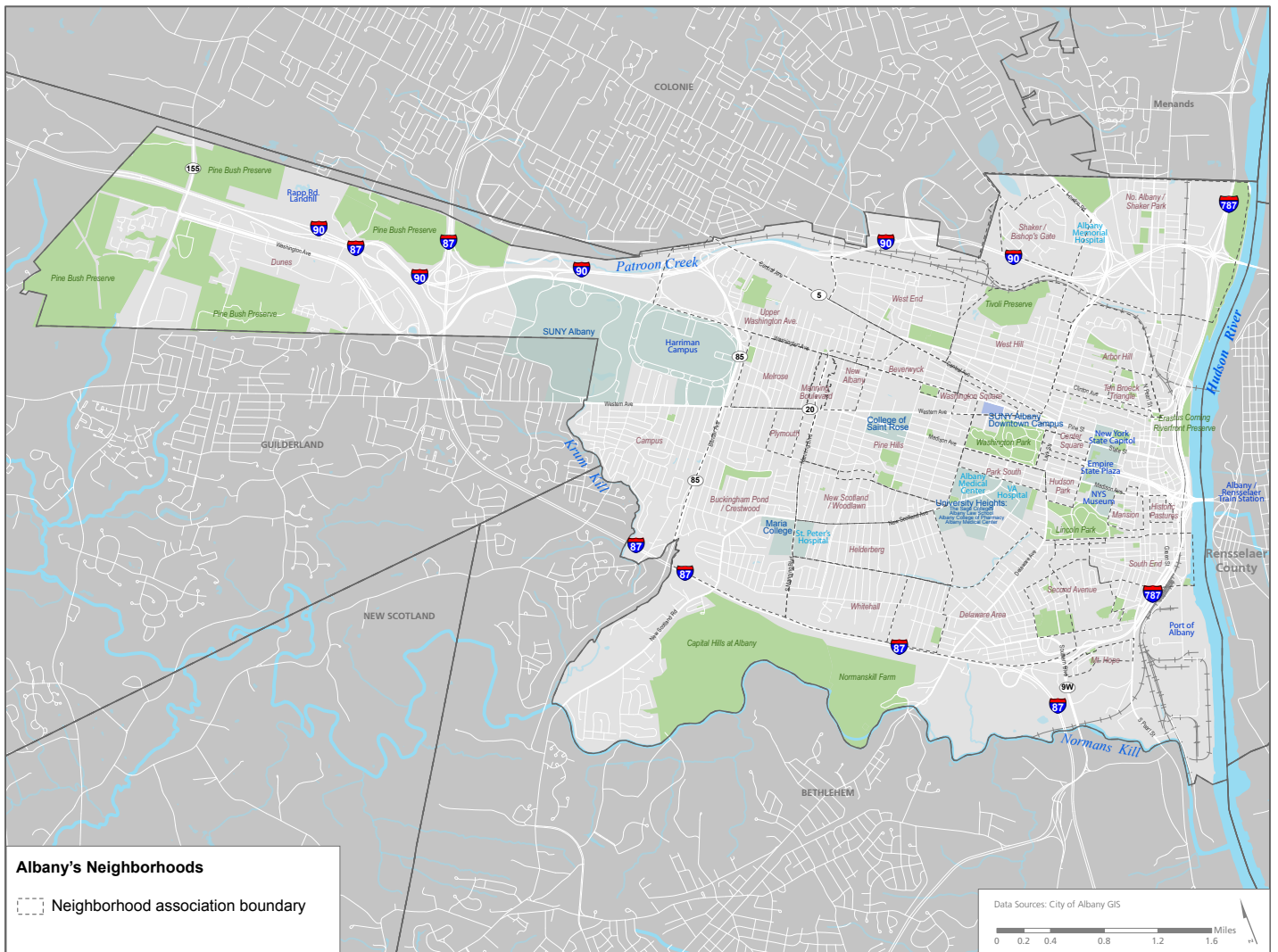
Strategies and Actions:

- HDC-1 Improve the balance between rentals and owner-occupied homes.
- HDC-2 Use zoning as a tool to incentivize a diverse housing stock.
- HDC-3 Provide and maintain intergenerational/life-cycle housing options.
- HDC-4 Develop creative financing tools to encourage mixed-income housing.
- HDC-5 Develop a marketing strategy to promote the City's neighborhoods.
- HDC-6 Use zoning to incentivize the development of affordable housing.
- HDC-7 Encourage mixed-income housing options throughout the City.
- HDC-8 Promote quality affordable housing through design guidelines.
- HDC-9 Use building and zoning code enforcement to improve housing quality
- HDC-10 Ensure adequate provisions for homelessness prevention, transition and housing
- HDC-11 Increase resilience of housing stock to the impacts of climate change.

Housing and Neighborhoods Key Issues

- About 50% of total housing units were built before 1940, indicating an aging housing stock but also a strong historic fabric.
- Housing vacancy in Albany increased by 12% from 1990-2000. The City had the highest ratio of vacant units compared to both the region and the state.
- More than half of Albany's housing is renter occupied, in part due to a large student population.
- In 2000, median monthly housing costs were less than 30% of household income, making Albany a relatively affordable place to live.
- The cost to rehabilitate older buildings and bring them up to code can be prohibitive.

Map 11 Albany's Neighborhoods



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HDC-1 Strategy: Improve the balance between rentals and owner-occupied homes. (Interrelated Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-2, HDC-3, HDC-4, HDC-7)

Actions:

- a. Partner with local employers and institutions to create incentives to encourage employees and renters to purchase homes in targeted neighborhoods.
- b. Utilize CDBG program funding and partner with banks or community housing organizations to sponsor mortgage assistance programs (e.g., targeted to low-income households) for potential homebuyers.
- c. Develop rehabilitation assistance programs and incentives to promote re-establishment of homeowner occupied housing.
- d. Ensure that neighborhoods provide a diverse mix of housing opportunities for both renters and homeowners.

HDC-2 Strategy: Use zoning and regulations as a tool to incentivize a diverse housing stock and mixed-income neighborhoods. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-1, LU-2; Economy INV-1, INV-2; Social AC-7; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-6, HDC-7)

Actions:

- a. Adopt zoning and other development regulations (e.g., inclusionary zoning, density bonuses, streamlined development review) to maintain and increase housing diversity, promote mixed-income neighborhoods, and make home ownership more affordable by reducing development costs.
- b. Promote increased mixed-use housing in downtown, through zoning regulations and incentives, to sustain weekend and evening pedestrian activity and encourage evening hours for retailers.
- c. Identify and remove barriers to aging in place.

BEST PRACTICES: MT. TABOR SENIOR HOUSING - PHILADELPHIA, PA

The Mt. Tabor Community Education and Economic Development Corporation developed an apartment building for seniors that is integrated with its larger neighborhood in Philadelphia. The neighborhood includes a mix of families, young adults, and seniors. The building is located adjacent to a church and bus routes and helps to support the revitalization of a nearby retail district. Amenities of the building include access to high-speed internet, technology education, physical fitness, and outdoor gardens.

HDC-3 Strategy: Provide and maintain intergenerational/life-cycle housing options that meet the needs of all age groups. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-2; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-2, HDC-4)

Actions:

- a. Encourage diverse intergenerational housing. Diverse housing includes options for residents throughout different stages of life (e.g., students, couples, families with children, seniors) in the same neighborhood.
- b. Encourage non-profit and for-profit developers to design senior housing that is integrated into the neighborhood.
- c. Provide opportunities for assisted living, supportive housing and shared services where appropriate.

HDC-4 Strategy: Develop creative financing tools to encourage mixed-income housing development. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-2; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-1, HDC-7)

Actions:

- a. Work with the Albany Housing Authority, other developers and housing groups to explore and create funding opportunities for mixed-income housing development.
- b. Seek out public-private partnerships to develop mixed-income, energy-efficient housing.
- c. Incentivize middle-class homeownership in targeted strategy areas as a means to improve economic diversity and economic stability in distressed areas.
- d. Ensure that affordable housing options are provided in all City neighborhoods.

HDC-5 Strategy: Develop a marketing strategy to promote the City's neighborhoods. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-1, INV-2; Social PS-7, AC-4; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-1, HDC-4)

Actions:

- a. Create a marketing strategy that highlights the benefits of city neighborhoods, including walkability, access to downtown, historic buildings, and lower transportation costs. Work with and build off of the successful efforts of local groups.

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Albany's uptown neighborhoods are home to larger lots, more square footage and wider tree-lined lanes.

- b. Create a Residents Incentives Package as recommended in Capitalize Albany for all city neighborhoods. The Residents Incentives Package could include a resident rewards card, discounts at local businesses, mass transit discounts, information about local services and businesses, and details about local neighborhood associations.

HDC-6 Strategy: Use zoning and development regulations to incentivize the development and redevelopment of affordable housing. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-1; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-2, HDC-7)

Actions:

- a. Adopt zoning and other development incentives (e.g., density bonuses, streamlined development review, reduced fees) to encourage affordable housing and mixed-income development. While Albany is relatively affordable (median monthly costs are less than 30% of median incomes), efforts should be made to ensure all neighborhoods provide housing options for low, moderate and high income individuals and families.

BEST PRACTICES: COMMUNITY GARDENS

Communities across the country are realizing the benefits of increasing access to local food and reducing vacant land and buildings. In Chicago, IL, City Council created a nonprofit entity to own, lease, manage, or hold easements for small open spaces for maintenance by neighborhood groups, including tax delinquent parcels. Other cities such as Cleveland, OH established an urban garden zoning district to appropriately locate and protect urban gardens.

BEST PRACTICES: ECO-DENSITY

In 2008, Vancouver, BC City Council adopted the EcoDensity Charter, committing the City to support housing affordability and livability in all city planning decisions. Priority actions under this program include requiring applications for new rezoning to meet a minimum LEED™ Silver rating, or similar equivalency in green design; requiring applications for new rezoning on large sites to provide a range of types and tenures; and removal of existing zoning or related barriers to green building approaches and affordable housing options (e.g., secondary suites in high density housing).

<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/ecocity/>

HDC-7 Strategy: Encourage mixed-income housing options throughout the City's neighborhoods. (Interrelated Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-1, HDC-2, HDC-3, HDC-4)

Actions:

- a. Adopt zoning and other incentives to encourage mixed-income housing (e.g., density bonuses, streamlined development review, reduced fees) throughout Albany's neighborhoods.
- b. Seek out public-private partnerships and non-profit housing developers to construct mixed-income housing on publically owned low-cost vacant parcels in the City.

HDC-8 Strategy: Promote quality affordable housing through design or land use guidelines. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-1, UD-1; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-9)

Actions:

- a. Adopt design guidelines focused on scale, design, and density to ensure that housing fits in with and is sensitive to its surrounding neighborhood context while addressing the needs of the modern family.
- b. Utilize energy-efficiency and renewable energy technologies in construction and rehabilitation projects as a means of increasing the long-term affordability of housing, as well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- c. Work with the Albany Housing Authority, neighborhood associations, and residents to define expectations for quality affordable housing and reduce potential conflicts with proposed projects.
- d. Consider identifying alternative housing types that allow increased densities, while having limited neighborhood impact.

HDC-9 Strategy: Use building and zoning code enforcement to improve housing quality and reduce building neglect. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-3, UD-1; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-8)

Actions:

- a. Prioritize and target key vacant and abandoned properties for mixed-income housing redevelopment.
- b. Modernize data systems, including utilizing mobile reporting technology, and integrate interactive opportunities for public access to digital information.

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Events, like this Arbor Hill Block Party sponsored by the Housing Authority and the City, create a sense of community and connection to local institutions.

- c. Continue and expand the efforts of the Block by Block code enforcement initiative that systematically and proactively addresses code issues at the neighborhood/individual property scale and includes the assessment and improvement of streetscape amenities and infrastructure.

HDC-10 Ensure adequate provisions for homelessness prevention, transition and housing (Interrelated Strategies: Social SS-1, SS-2, SS-5, SS-7)

Actions:

- a. Work with existing homeless assistance organizations to partner and share resources.
- b. Identify gaps in service that are not being met through existing homeless assistance organizations.
- c. Study the effectiveness of preventative programs, including housing subsidies, supportive services (substance abuse, mental health, etc.) coupled with permanent housing, legal support for evictions, and identifying and overcoming barriers to permanent housing.
- d. Consider developing a housing and homelessness strategy that includes the following elements:
 - Identify homeless demographics and the root causes of homelessness in Albany.

BEST PRACTICES: SCHOOL-CENTERED COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

Good schools will attract families to a neighborhood while poorly performing schools perpetuate the cycle of disinvestment. In Philadelphia, PA, the University of Pennsylvania worked with the school district to build a new public elementary school, supported by a neighborhood strategy that included housing loans, anti-crime, and business and economic development programs. The school quickly became one of the best performing public schools in the City and property values in the neighborhood have increased significantly. The student body is economically and racially diverse.

1 Reconnecting schools and neighborhoods <http://www.practitioner-resources.org/>

- Evaluate existing programs and identify overlaps and gaps
- Identify proven strategies for homeless prevention, permanent housing solutions, temporary assistance, and continuing services

HDC-11 Strategy: Increase resilience of housing stock to impacts of climate change. (Interrelated Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-8, HDC-9; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-4)

Actions:

- a. Investigate the potential benefits of forming mutual insurance pools to spread the risk of climate change.
- b. Develop a vulnerability assessment to identify areas most prone to the impacts of climate change.
- c. Consider adopting a Residential Energy Conservation Ordinance (RECO) that improves housing affordability and reduces environmental impacts by setting baseline energy efficiency requirements for existing rental housing.

NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

Albany's neighborhoods play a key role in the city's quality of life, preservation of historic and cultural resources, residential and commercial property values, and overall investment in the City.

Goal:

Maintain distinct, safe, quality neighborhoods that preserve and enhance the natural beauty, historic/architectural character, and cultural diversity of Albany.

Strategies and Actions:

- NI-1 Target blighting influences.
- NI-2 Use zoning and development regulations as a tool for investment.
- NI-3 Leverage institutional anchors to build neighborhood identity.
- NI-4 Create a partnership between neighborhood associations and institutions
- NI-5 Promote the use of web-based tools for neighborhood information sharing.

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This \$17 million mixed-use project at 16 New Scotland Avenue epitomizes the success of partnering with institutions, community groups, non-profits and State agencies spur neighborhood transformation.

NI-1 Strategy: Target blighting influences (e.g., vacant/substandard properties, brown-fields) to prevent and reverse decline. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-3, ARCH-2; Economy INV-1, INV-2, INV-3; Social PS-1, AC-6)

Actions:

- a. Implement a strategic acquisition and land banking program to combat and reverse decline and vacancy in the City's neighborhoods in partnership with other agencies.
- b. Finalize and implement the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Plan, including the systematic assessment of vacant properties, the creation of an acquisition fund and land banking program, and the development of strategic disposition strategies.
- c. Adopt *Artistic Board Up*, outlined in the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Plan, as the standard for vacant and abandoned property board-up.
- d. Address foreclosure and its barriers to transfer properties into productive residential and commercial reuse.
- e. Continue the practice of escalating fines and fees, and explore escalating assessment for vacant and abandoned properties to deter speculation and encourage reuse.

NI-2 Strategy: Use zoning and development regulations as a tool to encourage and incentivize neighborhood investment. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form UD-1, ARCH-1, ARCH-2; Economy INV-1, INV-2, INV-4)

Actions:

- a. Adopt design guidelines and incentives for adaptive reuse, redevelopment and infill development.
- b. Researching best practices in cooperation with New York State, develop and pilot a Rehabilitation Building Code that allows greater flexibility in restoration or rehabilitation of existing structures to encourage reuse rather than demolition of existing structures.
- c. Promote the use of historic tax credits and state and federal green building incentives to encourage rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings.

NI-3 Strategy: Build neighborhood identity, connections, and sense of community by leveraging institutional anchors. (Interrelated Strategies: Neighborhood Identity NI-4; Social CHR-3; Natural Resources OS-2; Institutions FP-3, RP-5)

Actions:

- a. Work with community stakeholders, institutions and neighborhood organizations to encourage and enhance community activities and events (e.g. block parties, neighborhood arts and cultural festivals), promote neighborhoods, and develop community projects and incentives (e.g. homeownership programs, community parks).
- b. Work with community stakeholders to encourage innovative reuse of vacant properties (e.g., urban agriculture, urban landscaping, vacant lot stabilization and community gardens).

The Albany Public Library completed a major renovation and new construction project to provide state-of-the-art neighborhood branches like this one in Albany's South End.



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NI-4 Strategy: Create a partnership between neighborhood associations and institutions to reduce the possible negative impacts of institutional facilities and projects on the surrounding community. (Interrelated Strategies: Neighborhood Identity NI-3; Institutions FP-3, FP-6, RP-5, NS-3)

Actions:

- a. Encourage neighborhood-level forums to address potential plans and impacts of institutions on adjacent neighborhoods. Encourage institutions to work with the City and community stakeholders early in the project planning phase to address potential concerns.

NI-5 Strategy: Promote the use of web-based tools and social media for neighborhood information sharing. (Interrelated Strategies: Utilities and Infrastructure COM-1, COM-2; Institutions RP-6)

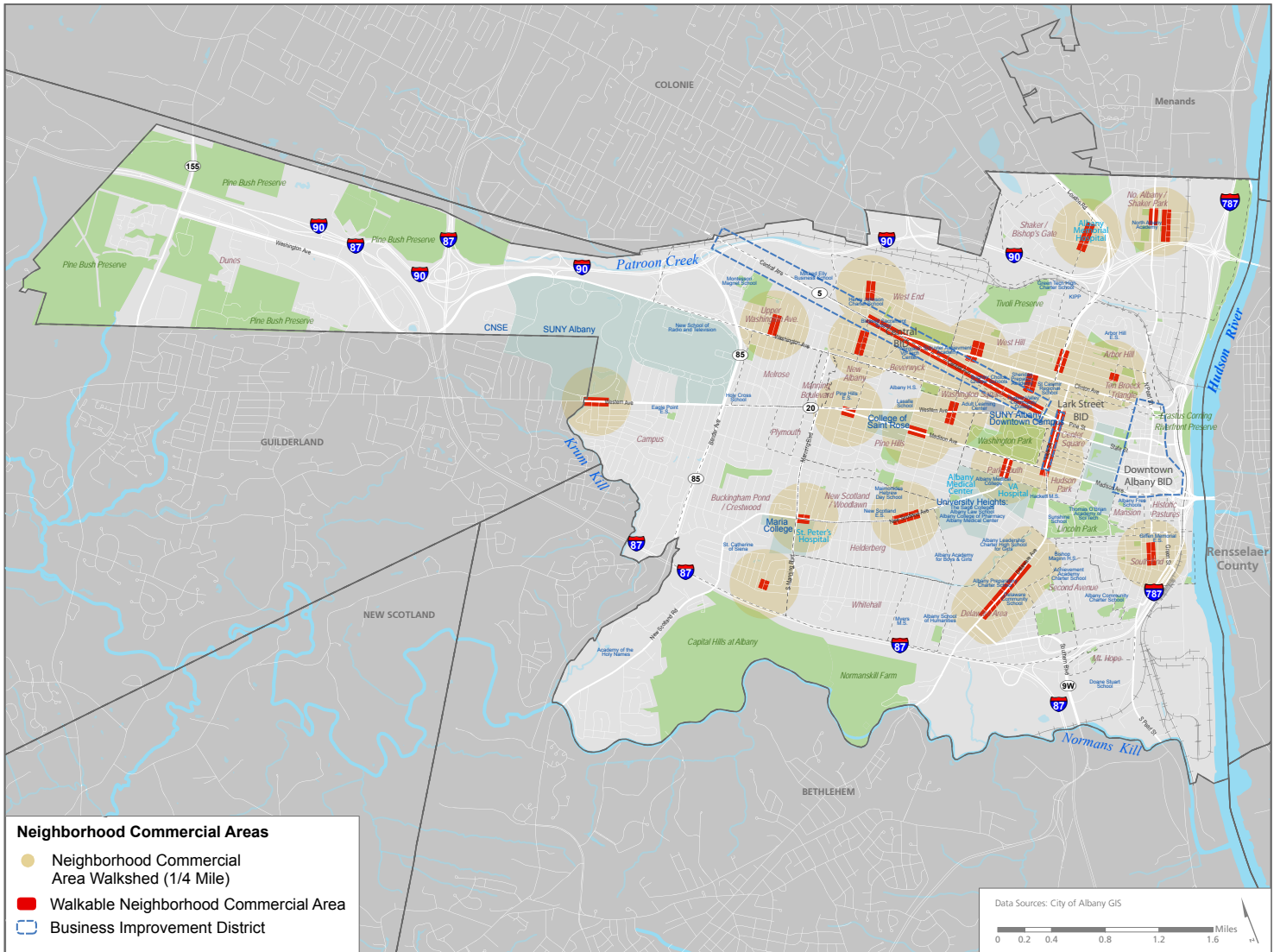
Actions:

- a. Work with neighborhood associations and other neighborhood stakeholders to develop a network of social media, listservs, or other interactive web-based forums to serve as a mechanism for residents to communicate general information such as, current events or public safety concerns.
- b. Expand the City of Albany's use of social media and other interactive web-based tools for sharing information and engaging the public.

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

The quality and accessibility of neighborhood services impacts the desirability and health of a neighborhood. Neighborhood services include commercial centers, transit, schools, parks and recreation, health services, libraries, and public safety.

Map 12 Neighborhood Commercial Opportunities



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Goal:

Provide access to basic neighborhood services, including commercial centers, parks, schools, transit, police protection, libraries, community centers, etc., for all neighborhoods.

Strategies and Actions:

NS-1 Enhance, promote, and strengthen neighborhood commercial centers.

NS-2 Increase transit connectivity between neighborhoods and employment centers.

NS-3 Partner with institutions to attract investment in surrounding neighborhoods.

NS-4 Locate libraries, schools, parks, and community centers close to neighborhoods.

NS-5 Focus on community policing methods.

NS-6 Address parking issues within neighborhoods.

NS-7 Increase access to healthy food options for all neighborhoods

NS-1 Strategy: Enhance, promote, and strengthen neighborhood commercial centers by supporting small, local businesses. See Map 12 for a map of neighborhood commercial opportunities in Albany.(Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-1; Economy INV-2, DIV-1; Institutions RP-5)

Actions:

- a. Develop a "buy local" membership campaign for local business or neighborhoods (e.g., local currency, businesses provide discounts on certain days, advertising, and neighborhood festivals).
- b. Partner with the BIDs, Community Loan Fund, Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce, Albany Center for Economic Success and/or Capitalize Albany Corporation to offer coordinated low-cost or free business planning services and financial incentives to local businesses and start-up companies.
- c. Encourage and incentivize anchor retail and restaurant establishments to locate to established neighborhood commercial centers.
- d. Create a small business liaison to help businesses navigate City and County regulations and lobby for changes.

NS-2 Strategy: Increase transit connectivity between and among city neighborhoods and employment centers. (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form LU-1, UD-1; Economy EMP-1, INV-1; Transportation MM-2, TR-2, TR-3; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3)

Actions:

- a. Work with the Capital District Transportation Authority to determine areas where improved transit connectivity is needed to serve employment growth areas.
- b. Encourage Transit Oriented Development (TOD) at future/planned sites for transit improvements.

NS-3 Strategy: Partner with institutions to attract investment in surrounding neighborhoods. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-4; Institutions RP-1, RP-2, Housing and Neighborhoods NI-4)

- a. Work with institutions to develop a strategy for improving investment in adjacent neighborhoods, such as financial investment in neighborhood schools, housing loans for faculty and staff, and neighborhood security.

NS-4 Strategy: Locate libraries, schools, parks, and community centers within walking distance of neighborhoods. (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-1, Transportation PED-1)

Actions:

- a. Encourage libraries, schools, parks, and community centers to function as centers of neighborhood activity (e.g., parks used as community gathering spaces, schools and libraries used for community meetings).
- b. Identify needed pedestrian and bicycle improvements (e.g., missing sidewalks, signed bike routes) to create safe routes to school.

NS-5 Strategy: Increase Neighborhood Watch programs and focus on a community policing method. (Interrelated Strategies: PS-3, PS-4)

Actions:

- a. Target quality of life crimes and improve safety/perception of safety in neighborhoods (e.g., improved street lighting and reductions in the number of vacant buildings).
- b. Increase neighborhood watch programs and improve communication between the police and neighborhood watch groups.

NS-6 Strategy: Address parking issues within neighborhoods. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-1; Transportation VEH-2)

Actions:


- a. Conduct a study of parking issues in commercial districts (e.g., spill-over traffic/congestion from Lark Street) and determine strategies to reduce impacts on neighborhoods.
- b. Study impacts of new permit parking regulations in downtown Albany neighborhoods, as well as neighborhoods that may experience spillover from the permit system.
- c. Ensure that the design of parking lots and structures is sensitive to neighborhood character.

NS-7 Strategy: Increase access to healthy food options for all neighborhoods. (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-3; Natural Resources OS-2, OS-3)

Actions:

- a. Partner with organizations such as The Food Trust and Low Income Investment Fund to bring full service grocery stores to underserved neighborhoods.
- b. Identify and market suitable sites for grocery stores within walking distance of neighborhoods and require pedestrian and bicycle amenities during site design (e.g., sidewalks, bike racks, parking located in garages).
- c. Investigate and incentivize the development of urban, neighborhood-scale grocery stores that provide diverse food options and job opportunities.
- d. Improve transit access to grocery stores and farmers markets.
- e. Foster the development of community Supported Agriculture (CSA) pick-up locations, farmers markets, markets and co-ops in accessible locations throughout the City.
- f. Encourage local institutions, stores and restaurants to use and offer fresh and locally-sourced produce, milk and meat.
- g. Encourage the creation and expansion of community gardens accessible to all neighborhoods in the City.





Utility and infrastructure systems are the engineered facilities and conveyance networks required to serve the developmental and operational needs of Albany as a whole and day-to-day functional needs of citizens. While often taken for granted, these systems have an enormous impact on the sustainability and health of the City and its residents. For example, combined discharges from Albany’s aging sanitary sewer and stormwater systems are significantly impacting the quality of local water resources, including the Hudson River. In another example, how residents and businesses are supplied with and use energy impacts their personal financial situations, affects local air quality, and contributes to global climate change. “Retooling” utility and infrastructure systems through approaches such as “green” stormwater infrastructure (i.e., that absorbs and filters runoff through techniques that mimic natural hydrology) offers ample opportunities to move towards the sustainable, green city articulated in the Albany 2030 Vision Statement.

Transportation facilities, another type of community infrastructure, are addressed in Section 3.4 above.

The Livingston Avenue Bridge, built in 1901, is an operating swing bridge dedicated to freight and passenger rail at Albany’s north waterfront district.

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- Utilities and Infrastructure**
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3.7 Utilities and Infrastructure

Key utility and infrastructure system components include energy supply and use, public drinking water, sewer systems, stormwater management, solid waste management, and communications.

ENERGY

The way we produce and use energy has a cumulative effect on human health, environmental resiliency, and economic sustainability. Whenever fossil fuels are used to generate energy for everyday needs – home heating, transportation, manufacturing - greenhouse gases are emitted into the atmosphere. These gases trap heat and the results change the earth’s climate in detrimental ways, including higher sea levels, degraded air quality, and extremes in temperature and precipitation. Using energy efficiently and conserving energy and materials will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Goal:

Promote energy conservation, efficiency, and use of renewable technologies as a mechanism for climate change mitigation.

Strategies and Actions:

- EN-1 Implement the initiatives developed by the Mayor’s Office of Energy and Sustainability and as outlined in the City’s Climate Action and Adaptation Plans.
- EN-2 Develop an education program to communicate energy and sustainability goals.
- EN-3 Promote Multi-Modal transportation choices to reduce vehicle miles traveled.
- EN-4 Incentivize energy-efficiency / renewable energy technologies in construction projects.



Utilities & Infrastructure Key Issues

- Albany is establishing itself as a leader in energy and sustainability planning:
 - o It has initiated the creation of an Energy and Sustainability Office.
 - o It has pledged to combat climate change by becoming a New York State Climate Smart Community.
 - o It completed a baseline inventory of Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHGs) in order to set reduction targets and guide attainment programs.
- In 2007 and 2010, Albany won first prize for the best tasting drinking water in the State during a competition at the New York State Fair. In 2011, it was honored as a top-five best tasting city waters in America. Recent improvements at the Water Filtration Plant have further improved drinking water quality.
- About 2/3 of the City is serviced by an aging combined storm/ sanitary sewer system, which can overflow into the Hudson River during wet weather events.
- The Albany Water Board is currently undertaking a major planning study for mitigation of the combined sewer overflows.

List continues on page 158

- The Rapp Road Landfill is near capacity and is located in a sensitive preserved ecosystem, the Pine Bush Preserve.
- Albany currently diverts 42% of its waste in the form of recycling, reuse and composting. The goal is to divert 65% of the city's waste from the landfill by 2030.
- A poll conducted by Tech Valley Communications found extremely low Internet usage in the city's poorest neighborhoods.

EN-1 Strategy: Implement the initiatives developed by the Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability and as outlined in the City's Climate Action and Adaptation Plans for energy efficiency, greenhouse gas emissions, and climate mitigation and adaptation. (Inter-related Strategies: Economy EMP-5; Social PS-6; Transportation VEH-4; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-11; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-2, EN-3, EN-4)

Actions:

- Identify funding sources and staffing to continue the operation of the Energy and Sustainability Office.
- Create a baseline inventory of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that identifies all sources of energy and GHG emissions from government operations and the community as a whole. Use the inventory as a benchmark to track progress towards GHG reduction goals.
- Reduce energy consumption in municipal operations:
 - Implement the Green Fleet Program, which aims to replace 25% of the City's gasoline or diesel vehicles with alternative fueled / hybrid vehicles by 2030.
 - Develop a Municipal Facility Energy-Efficiency Plan that includes comprehensive energy audits and a multi-year phasing and funding plan to retrofit municipal buildings with green building practices, such as energy efficient lighting, Energy Star appliances, green roofs, recycled materials, and renewable energy sources.
 - Incorporate green building practices in all new construction and renovation projects for municipal buildings.
 - Explore all options for renewable energy systems at City of Albany properties and facilities and implement demonstration projects.
 - Develop a municipal facility managers training program focused on energy-efficiency, operations, and monitoring building performance.
 - Develop and implement a Green IT Management Plan.
 - Implement the Green Fleet Program, which aims to replace City's gasoline or diesel vehicles with alternative fueled / hybrid vehicles.
- Develop a Residential Energy-Efficiency Program.
 - Work with partners to develop a program to provide residents with low-cost or free energy audits for residential buildings.
 - Determine the feasibility of implementing a PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) Program to finance energy-efficiency improvements in residential properties.
 - Consider adopting a Residential Energy Conservation Ordinance (RECO) that improves housing affordability and reduces environmental impacts by setting baseline energy efficiency requirements for existing rental housing.

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- e. Work with National Grid and New York State Public Service Commission to develop a plan to convert existing streetlights to more energy-efficient LED's.

EN-2 Strategy: Develop an education program to communicate the City's energy and sustainability goals and accomplishments to residents, businesses, and institutions (Interrelated Strategies: Utilities and Infrastructure EN-1, WS-2, SWM-1)

Actions:

- Establish a community advisory committee within the Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability comprised of neighborhood leaders, business leaders, and institutional leaders to communicate the City's energy and sustainability goals and objectives.
- Create a marketing program that communicates the relative costs and savings of incorporating energy saving techniques such as alternative energy sources, transit use, Energy Star materials and appliances, etc and provides links to existing state, federal, and private programs.

EN-3 Strategy: Promote multi-modal transportation choices to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)¹². (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form UD-1; Economy EMP-1, INV-1; Transportation MM-1, MM-2, BIC-1, TR-2, TR-3, TR-4; Natural Resources AQ-1; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-2)

Actions:

- Develop a Complete Streets program including design standards, land use plans, and zoning regulations that provide the highest level of integration between pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders.
- Provide incentives for Transit Oriented Development at potential transit center sites and existing hubs.
- Implement the Albany Bicycle Master Plan to increase the number of bicycle routes and signage to encourage residents to safely commute by bicycle.
- Employ transportation demand management techniques to encourage the use of bicycling, transit, car pooling, and car sharing.
- Increase transit connectivity between and among City neighborhoods and employment centers.
- Explore transit expansion options, including the potential for bus rapid transit (BRT) service, and support the planning process for the implementation of high speed rail.

¹² Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) is the total number of miles driven by all motor vehicles within a given time period and geographic area. The transportation sector accounts for 28% of total greenhouse gas emissions in the US. The primary greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide, and every gallon of gasoline burned produces about 20 pounds of CO2 emissions (Ewing, Reid, et. al., Growing Cooler, ULI, 2007).

Figure 1 Example Green Building Techniques

Passive Cooling

Building orientation, operable windows, window shades and awnings optimize indoor climate for maximum comfort

Green Roof System

Solar panels, vegetated roof cover, and light-colored roof surfaces decrease building energy costs and the urban heat island effect—an area with consistently higher temperatures than surrounding areas because of a greater retention of heat

Mixed-Use Development

Creates vibrant, walkable neighborhoods

Transit Connection

Provides transportation choices and decreases reliance on automobiles

Proximity to Open Space

Provides access to recreation, increases property value



Overflow Drain

Transfers overflow from green roof to constructed wetland system

Greywater Recycling

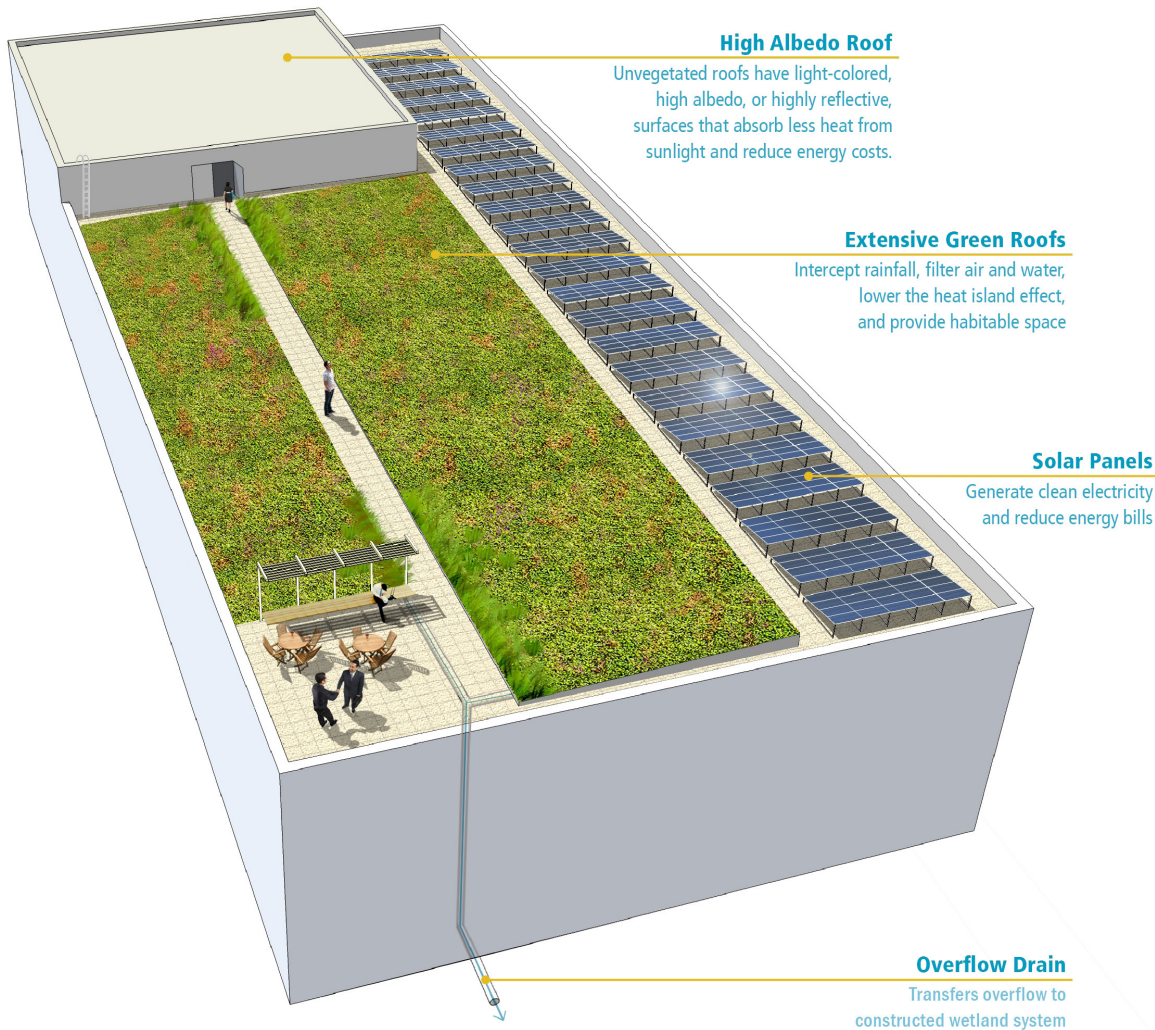
Utilizes water from bathing and washing for reuse

Geothermal or Ground Source Heat Pumps

Electrically powered systems that tap the stored thermal energy of the earth to generate electricity and heat water

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EN-4 Strategy: Incentivize energy-efficiency and renewable energy technologies in construction and rehabilitation projects. See Figure 1 for examples of green building techniques. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy EMP-5; Housing and Neighborhoods HDC-11; Utilities and Infrastructure EN-1)

Actions:

- a. Consider a code revision to encourage all new development and major rehabilitation projects to have “cool” roofs (i.e., white or grey roofs with a high solar reflectivity index) or green roofs to reduce the urban heat island effect¹³.
- b. Require that all new buildings, which meet certain size and/or density thresholds, built or rehabilitated with public-private funding be LEED Certified or meet some other established minimum level of energy-efficiency and sustainable site specifications established by the city.
- c. Consider developing a green building overlay that provides incentives, such as height and density bonuses or a green building liaison to assist in fast-tracking projects, to projects that meet specific green building and sustainable site standards.
- d. Create tax-rebates or incentives to encourage businesses and residents to replace older, inefficient appliances (e.g., refrigerators, toilets, heaters) with new Energy-Star appliances.
- e. Update building codes to reflect the latest in energy-efficient building code standards for new and rehabilitated housing (e.g., International Green Construction Code).
- f. Partner with New York State’s Weatherization Assistance Program and local utilities (e.g., National Grid) or non-profits to offer low-cost energy audits and services (e.g., weatherization) to Albany residents.
- g. Develop municipal renewable energy pilots to showcase and educate the public and development community about the feasibility and benefits of renewable energy.
- h. Develop lighting standards that promote energy-efficiency, reduce light pollution, while provide adequate lighting for safety.
- i. Investigate a potential site to pilot a district energy project.

¹³ The urban heat island effect is created when urban areas develop, and buildings, roads, and other impervious surfaces replace permeable open land and vegetation. These dry, impervious surfaces absorb heat, causing urban regions to become warmer than their rural surroundings, forming an “island” of higher temperatures in the landscape.

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WATER AND SEWER

Albany’s main drinking water source is the Alcove Reservoir, located on the Hannacroix Creek in the Town of Coeymans. Supplemental drinking water sources include the Loudonville Reservoir and the Six Mile Reservoir. Albany’s drinking water is considered very high quality and even won recognition as the “best tasting drinking water in the State of New York”. Protecting the quality and conserving the supply of this distinctive resource is critical to the health and welfare of Albany’s citizens.

The City’s and County’s system for wastewater treatment is key to protecting the quality of drinking water supplies, groundwater resources, and surface waters in the City and region. The Albany County Sewer District owns and operates two wastewater treatment facilities, designated North and South. The South Plant is located in the Port of Albany and treats waste only from the City of Albany. About two-thirds of the City’s sewers are combined (sanitary/storm) sewers. The combined sewers discharge to the South Plant. During heavy rains, excess water is discharged to the Hudson River. This is referred to as combined sewer overflow (CSO) and has serious impacts on water quality. The Albany Water Board and the Capital District Regional Planning Commission are currently undertaking a major planning study for mitigation of the CSOs, called the CSO Long Term Control Plan.

Goal:

Maintain the quality of the City’s wastewater management system, conserve water, and protect the City’s drinking water supply.

BEST PRACTICE: RECLAIMED WATER PROGRAM, OLYMPIA, WA

The LOTT Wastewater Alliance, which provides wastewater management services for Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater, and Thurston County, WA, started a Reclaimed Water Program in 2006. LOTT’s reclaimed water is treated to Class A Reclaimed Water standards – water that is clean enough for public contact and almost any use except drinking, (including many high demand purposes, thus allowing communities to stretch their water supplies). Class A Reclaimed Water can be used for irrigation, decorative fountains and ponds, industrial processing, pressure washing, toilet flushing, groundwater recharge, and streamflow and wetland enhancement.

<http://www.lottcleanwater.org/reclaimed.htm>



Since 1994, Albany’s Water Department has invested more than \$25 million in capital projects to upgrade Albany’s water and sewer systems.

Strategies and Actions:

WS-1 Implement Long-Term Control Plan to mitigate water quality impacts of CSO's.

WS-2 Encourage water conservation.

WS-3 Control sources of negative environmental impact.

WS-4 Assess the feasibility and market for selling excess drinking water to regional towns and municipalities.

WS-1 Strategy: Implement the Long Term Control Plan to mitigate the water quality impacts of combined sewer overflows (CSO's). (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources WW-1, WW-2; Utilities and Infrastructure SW-1, SW-2)

Actions:

- a. Complete the Long Term Control Plan currently under development by the CDRPC on behalf of the Albany Pool Communities.
- b. Implement New York State Best Management Practices (BMPs) for combined sanitary and storm sewers. Include BMPs that reduce stormwater runoff, restore wetlands, improve riparian corridors, and reduce costs associated with CSO solutions.
- c. Implement phased green infrastructure strategies to reduce stormwater runoff and ultimately mitigate CSOs impacts, to comply with New York State water quality standards, and Clean Water Act requirements. Potential strategies include new street trees, underground cisterns, green roofs, green streets, and rainwater capture.

WS-2 Strategy: Encourage water conservation to reduce volume in sewers and to save energy on heating, pumping, and treating water. (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources WW-6, Utilities and Infrastructure EN-2, EN-4)

Actions:

- a. Set city-wide department targets for reducing water use in public facilities and buildings.
- b. Partner with public schools, universities, other institutions, and businesses to reduce water use through conservation measures (e.g., reduce the need for landscape watering through native landscaping or rain gardens; replace older toilets and bathroom fixtures to improve efficiency).
- c. Develop a marketing campaign and/or incentives to encourage residents to reduce water consumption, install high-efficiency fixtures and appliances, and shift high water use activities (e.g., washing clothes, dishwashing) to non-peak hours.

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- d. Work with New York State to revise the building code to allow the use of greywater recycling systems (i.e., untreated household wastewater from showers, bathroom sinks, washing machines) for irrigation and other non-potable uses.
- e. Develop standards for new construction and rehabilitation projects to require the use of high-efficiency toilets and low-flow fixtures.
- f. Work with the Albany County Sewer District and Albany Water Board to explore the potential for a Reclaimed Water Program. Reclaimed water is wastewater that is treated and distributed for non-potable use and is commonly known as gray water (safe for uses other than drinking water). This water is often available at a significantly lower rate than potable water.
- g. Work with the Cornell Cooperative Extension or the city's Department of General Services to provide a discount to residents to purchase rain barrels.
- h. Investigate the feasibility of utilizing the City's gravity fed water and sewer system for renewable energy generation.
- i. Develop a citywide comprehensive drought management plan, including the monitoring of water supply storage levels.

WHAT IS GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE?

Green infrastructure is a storm-water management technique that preserves, restores, enhances, or mimics natural hydrology. A green infrastructure system integrates the built environment with soil, water, and plant systems that intercept stormwater, infiltrate a portion of it into the ground, evaporate a portion of it into the air, and in some cases release a portion of it slowly back into the sewer system, resulting in reduced and cleaner discharge into surface waters.



In 2011, the City received a \$361,000 grant from the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation for a green infrastructure demonstration project on Sate Street.

BEST PRACTICE: PHILADELPHIA WATER DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF WATERSHEDS

Philadelphia has a stormwater system that is 60% Combined Sewer and 40% Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4). To manage stormwater runoff more efficiently, the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) is institutionalizing green infrastructure across the city through demonstration and restoration projects, a new stormwater fee system, and a new stormwater management ordinance with stringent stormwater regulations for all new construction and redevelopment projects.

The new ordinance focuses on a performance-based approach, requiring developers to manage the first inch of stormwater on-site. The Philadelphia Stormwater Management Guidance Manual was created to assist developers in meeting the requirements of the regulations and includes guidelines for meeting requirements through innovative green infrastructure techniques such as bioswales, green roofs, filtration strips, and porous pavement, etc.

http://phillywatersheds.org/what_were_doing/green_infrastructure
<http://www.phillyriverinfo.org/WICLibrary/PSMGM%20V2.0.pdf>

WS-3 Strategy: Control other sources of impact on waterways (construction runoff, illicit discharges, nonpoint pollution, etc.). (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources WW-1, WW-2, TS-1; Utilities and Infrastructure SW-4)

Actions:

- a. The City of Albany, along with other New York communities, will soon be required by the federal Clean Water Act to enact new local ordinances to regulate activities that discharge to municipal separated storm sewer systems (MS4s). These regulations will address illicit discharges of wastewater and toxic chemicals, construction site runoff control, and pollution prevention. The new ordinances should include strengthened development standards to minimize site disturbance during construction near water sources.

WS-4 Assess the feasibility and market for selling excess drinking water to regional towns and municipalities. (Interrelated Strategies: Utilities and Infrastructure WS-2; Institutions RP-6, RP-2)

Actions:

- a. Quantify excess capacity in City of Albany water reserves to determine feasibility of distribution.
- b. Identify potential market for excess water distribution.
- c. Identify infrastructure needs to facilitate distribution.

STORMWATER

Stormwater management is a critical issue in urbanized areas like Albany. When stormwater collects pollutants such as road salt, petroleum products, pesticides, and litter from impervious surfaces and carries them into surface waters, sensitive resources, including drinking water supply, wildlife habitat, and surface water quality, are all impacted. In Albany, the stormwater management system consists primarily of engineered facilities that collect and discharge stormwater via outlets. In the case of combined sanitary and storm sewers, stormwater is discharged into the South Plant wastewater treatment facility. As previously mentioned, when the system is overwhelmed during heavy rain events, excess water containing untreated sewage is discharged to the Hudson River. Separated sewers, referred to as municipal separated storm sewer systems, or MS4s, discharge stormwater directly into natural watercourses such as the Krum Kill, the Normans Kill, the Patroon Creek and the Hudson River.

Stormwater management in Albany is regulated by the City's Stormwater Management and Erosion Control regulations (Article 14 of the City Code). The Code cites the New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual as an official guide and specifications for stormwater management. The Design Manual includes recommendations for green infrastructure techniques in development projects to reduce urban runoff.

Goal:

Use stormwater management best practices to reduce impacts on water quality and mitigate costs of engineered stormwater systems.

Strategies and Actions:

SW-1 Create a green infrastructure system.

SW-2 Incorporate green infrastructure practices in the Long Term Control Plan for CSO's.

SW-3 Reduce impermeable surfaces through land development regulations.

SW-4 Create Low Impact Development Design Guidelines.

SW-1 Strategy: Create a green infrastructure system as an alternative and complement to "grey" (engineered) infrastructure in order to better absorb stormwater runoff and filter pollutants. (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources WW-1, WW-2; Utilities and Infrastructure WS-1, SW-2, SW-3, SW-4)

Actions:

a. Develop a green infrastructure plan that sets targets for reductions in impervious surfaces and stormwater sewer inputs. As part of the plan, establish a "toolbox" of green infrastructures techniques (green streets, permeable pavers, green roofs, bioswales, riparian buffers, tree plantings, etc.) and new code language that can be implemented and adopted, respectfully, to achieve targets, and other techniques identified in the New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual. Quantify the potential fiscal benefits of a green infrastructure system.

See Figure 2 for examples of green infrastructure techniques.

b. Develop stormwater management demonstration projects (e.g., "green streets" with new street trees, tree trenches, permeable pavers, and modified stormwater inlets) in target locations such as parking lots, residential streets, and parks and measure performance in absorbing runoff.

c. Identify and pilot a "green neighborhood" utilizing a comprehensive green infrastruc-

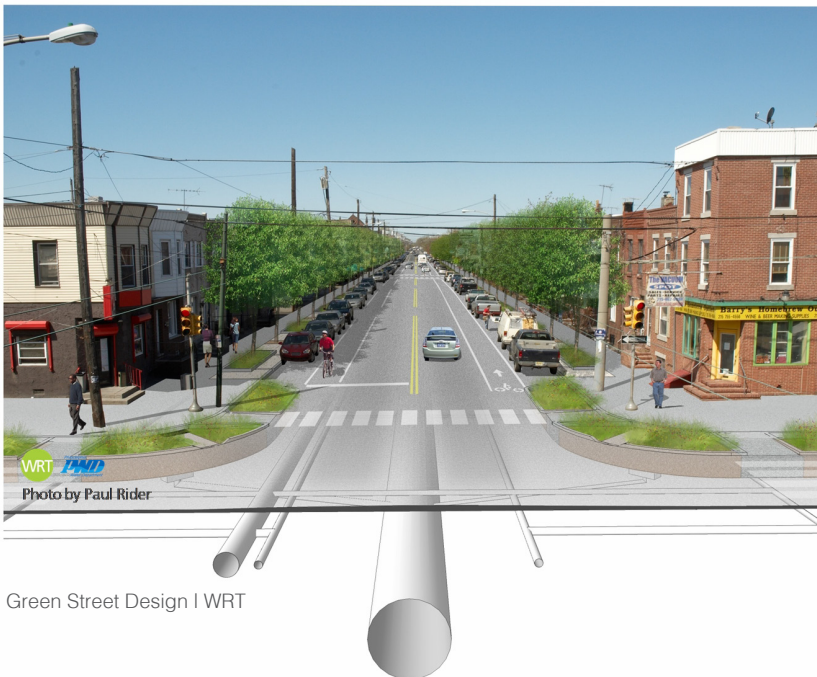
Figure 2 Examples of Green Infrastructure Techniques



Bioswale | Philadelphia Water Department Stormwater Manual



Pervious Paving | PWD Stormwater Manual



Green Street Design | WRT



Rain Barrel | PWD Stormwater Manual

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Riparian Buffer | Designed for Manchester, CT | WRT

ture system built as part of public and private redevelopment activities.

SW-2 Strategy: Incorporate green infrastructure strategies in the Long Term Control Plan to mitigate the water quality impacts of combined sewer overflows (CSO's). (Interrelated Strategies: Natural Resources WW-1, WW-2; Utilities and Infrastructure SW-1)

Actions:

- a. Implement New York State Best Management Practices (BMPs) for combined sanitary and storm sewers. Include BMPs that reduce stormwater runoff, restore wetlands, improve riparian corridors, and reduce costs associated with CSO solutions.
- b. Implement phased strategies to reduce stormwater runoff and ultimately mitigate CSOs impacts to comply with New York State water quality standards, and Clean Water Act requirements. Potential strategies include new street trees, underground cisterns, green roofs, and rainwater capture.
- c. Retrofit existing impermeable surfaces as feasible.

SW-3 Strategy: Reduce impermeable surfaces through land development regulations. (Interrelated Strategies: Transportation MM-1; Natural Resources WW-2; Utilities and Infrastructure WS-3, SW-1, SW-4)

Actions:

- a. Allow for permeable pavements to be used in low-volume traffic areas, such as sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, alleys, and when feasible, roadways.
- b. Establish impervious coverage limits for buildings and pavement.
- c. Where appropriate, allow reduced road widths and reduced and alternative parking strategies, such as shared parking, off-site parking, and allow on-street parking to count toward parking space requirements.
- d. Explore the potential for a fee structure for stormwater management that determines fees by calculating the amount of impervious cover on a given property, providing a financial incentive to develop or retrofit properties with green infrastructure practices that reduce impervious cover.

SW-4 Strategy: Create Low Impact Development Design Guidelines (Interrelated Strategies: Community Form UD-1, Utilities and Infrastructure WS-3, SW-1, SW-3)

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Actions:

- a. Develop a technical manual that includes Low Impact Development Design Guidelines to meet targets for reduced impervious surfaces and stormwater sewer inputs based on a green infrastructure plan and Long-Term Control Plan. The Low Impact Development (LID) approach promotes the use of techniques that filter water and infiltrate water into the ground rather than sending it into conveyance systems. It promotes the use of natural plant and soil systems with roofs of buildings, parking lots, and other horizontal surfaces to convey water to either distribute it into the ground or collect it for reuse. Examples of LID techniques include rain barrels, rain gardens, green roofs, bioswales, permeable pavement, etc. LID Guidelines should include clear guidelines for low-impact development in construction and reducing runoff.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Solid waste management includes the collection, transport, processing, recycling disposal, and monitoring of waste materials, or trash, produced by human activity.

The City of Albany, acting as lead agent for the Capital Region Solid Waste Management Partnership Planning Unit, operates a regional solid waste management system that includes the city-owned and operated Rapp Road Landfill as well as recycling operations.

The Capital Region Recycling Partnership is a committee of The Capital Region Solid Waste Management Partnership and is made up of 14 municipalities¹⁴, including the City of Albany, that work together to improve waste reduction practices in their communities.

The Planning Unit has recently completed an update to the region's solid waste management plan (SWMP Modification) to address goals and objectives for waste reduction, reuse and recycling as well as issues regarding expansion of the Rapp Road Landfill, which is expected to reach capacity by 2016, and related impacts on the adjacent Pine Bush Preserve. The City is addressing goals and objectives for solid waste management, including a target to divert 65% of Albany's waste from the landfill by 2030.

Goal:

Increase recycling and reduce the solid waste stream.

¹⁴ Cities of Albany, Cohoes, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Watervliet; the Villages of Altamont, Voorhesville, and Green Island; and the Towns of Berne, Bethlehem, Coeymans, Guilderland, Knox, New Scotland, Rensselaerville, and Westerlo.

Strategies and Actions:

SWM-1 Maintain and expanding waste reduction, reuse and recycling efforts.

SWM-2 Explore alternatives for solid waste reduction and disposal.

SWM-1 Strategy: Maintain and expand waste reduction, reuse and recycling efforts, including recommendations set forth in the SWMP Modification¹⁵. (Interrelated Strategies: Utilities and Infrastructure EN-1, SWM-2)

Actions:

- a. Appoint a Planning Unit Recycling Coordinator (PURC) as an area-wide resource to promote waste reduction and recycling, monitor compliance with municipal recycling ordinances, provide assistance in applying for available grant funding, and compile annual information about recycling program achievement in each municipality.
- b. Enhance education and enforcement to increase reduction and recycling in all sectors.
- c. Continue to conduct commercial waste inspections to determine presence of excess recyclables.
- d. Encourage backyard composting, organic waste recycling and yard waste management throughout the Planning Unit.
- e. Work with the Cornell Cooperative Extension or the city's Department of General Services to provide a discount to residents to purchase composters.
- f. Work with institutions, waste haulers, and Planning Unit partners to reduce waste, increase recycling, and improve reuse.

SWM-2 Strategy: Explore alternatives for solid waste reduction and disposal.

Actions:

- a. Create incentives for reducing solid waste disposal. As recommended in the SWMP, explore the effectiveness and feasibility of pay-as-you-throw programs, or volume-based disposal charges to create financial incentives for waste reduction and recycling.
- b. Expand yard waste composting programs and pilot a neighborhood composting and organics diversion program.
- c. Adopt policies to reduce office waste in municipal offices (e.g., double sided printing,

¹⁵ Solid Waste Management Plan Modification for the Capital Region Solid Waste Management Partnership Planning Unit: <http://www.capitalregionlandfill.com/documents/SWMP-Modification-final.pdf>

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electronic filing).

- d. Expand alternatives which recover energy from waste, such as the current methane power generation at the Rapp Road Landfill.
- e. Develop a building and construction material reuse and recycling program.
- f. Increase the percentage of demolition material diversion required as part of demolition permit approval and develop a compliance tracking system.
- g. Implement single-stream recycling for residents.
- h. Develop a pilot building deconstruction or green demolition program.

COMMUNICATIONS

Technology has changed the way people communicate, and a variety of communications options are necessary to keep community voices engaged and connected to local and global networks. As communications technologies continue to grow and innovate, the provision of high-quality and accessible services plays an increasingly important role in economic development and community planning.

The world is becoming a wireless society, and access to wireless networks is not just a luxury, but a necessity for educational and economic competitiveness. Through its Universal Broadband Initiative, the State of New York has committed to having affordable, high-speed internet service available in all parts of the state, and to have a citizenry that is capable of using it. Albany currently provides wireless service through Albany FreeNet, which, although free, has download limits and generally cannot be accessed from homes. The challenge is to affordably expand wireless service to improve educational and economic competitiveness, and to close the “digital divide” by increasing internet access and usage in throughout Albany’s diverse neighborhoods.

Goal:

Provide equitable communication opportunities for communities throughout the City.

Strategies and Actions:

COM-1 Improve, develop and maintain communications infrastructure.

COM-2 Improve access to communications technology for all residents.

BEST PRACTICE: BUFFALO REUSE GREEN DEMOLITION – BUFFALO, NY

Buffalo ReUse is a green demolition and salvage company that reuses construction materials and recycles materials that can't be reused (metal, wood waste, concrete). Buffalo ReUse also accepts donated construction materials and offers a tax deduction letter for the value of donated items.

<http://www.buffaloreuse.org/Green-Demolition/GreenDemolition>

COM-1 Strategy: Improve, develop and maintain communications infrastructure. (Inter-related Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods NI-5; Utilities and Infrastructure COM-2; Institutions RP-6)

Actions:

- a. Partner with the New York State Office of Technology, communications service providers, the school district, and major institutions to expand wireless internet service for commercial, institutional and residential use throughout Albany and the Capital Region.
- b. Work with utilities and communications service providers to develop a long-term plan to address the projected climate change impacts on the existing communications infrastructure.
- c. Expand low/no-cost access to high speed internet access across the City.

COM-2 Strategy: Develop strategies to improve access to communications technology for all residents. (Interrelated Strategies: Social ED-5; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-5; Institutions RP-6)

Actions:

- a. Partner with Tech Valley Communications on an educational campaign to inform residents in targeted neighborhood about available options for high speed internet access, including locations for free computer access in libraries, schools and community centers, and low cost service plans for in-home use.



The Albany Public Library branches provide public computers with free access to the internet.

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- b. Expand high-speed internet access in public locations, including libraries, senior centers, community centers, and schools.
- c. Expand low/no-cost access to high speed internet access across the City.



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This system addresses both the contributions and impacts of institutional uses, including federal, state, county, and local government, colleges and universities, health care facilities, and authorities. As major employers and stakeholders, Albany's institutions play a key role in shaping the City's economy, land use pattern, and culture.

In addition to the City of Albany, institutions in Albany include the federal and state governments, Albany County and the City of Albany; colleges and universities (e.g., University at Albany, College of Saint Rose, Union University, Sage Colleges); health care facilities (e.g., Albany Medical Center, Albany Memorial Hospital, Albany Veteran's Hospital, St. Peter's Hospital); and authorities (e.g., Capital District Transportation Authority, Albany Housing Authority).

As the State Capital, Albany is home to multiple layers of governmental bodies, education institutions, hospitals, authorities and state-wide non-profits. They impact the City's landscape, as seen here with the gothic SUNY administration headquarters, and also the City's economy, quality of life and infrastructure.



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3.8 Institutions

The key components of Albany’s institutional system are: relationships and partnerships, facilities and projects, and fiscal impacts.

RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Albany’s concentration of institutions is one of the City’s greatest strengths. While there are existing connections between the City’s institutions, strengthening and creating new relationships and partnerships is essential to the reaching the 2030 Vision for Albany.

Goal:

Foster relationships and create new partnerships among the different levels of government (i.e., local, regional, and state), surrounding municipalities, and institutions that focus on cooperative planning for growth and development.

Strategies and Actions:

- RP-1 Work together to attract and support businesses and start-ups.
- RP-2 Create, implement and expand regional plans for multi-modal transportation, open space networks, and green infrastructure.
- RP-3 Create and maintain open lines of communication between institutions.
- RP-4 Position the City as a leader in regional cooperation.
- RP-5 Work together to revitalize downtown and key neighborhood mixed-use nodes.
- RP-6 Enhance data-sharing partnerships with institutions.

Institutions Key Issues



- Education, health care, and government are major employment sectors in the Albany MSA. Between 1990 and 2008, the number of jobs in education and health services increased, while government jobs decreased.
- The government sector is projected to continue its decline, while education and health service jobs are projected to increase.
- Albany’s nine higher education institutions provide many positive impacts, including spinoff enterprises, young creative residents, and diverse employment opportunities.
- Issues related to Albany’s colleges and universities can include tensions between neighborhood residents and students and their tax-exempt status.
- A high percentage of land in Albany is tax-exempt: 12% of the total number of properties is tax-exempt; 58% of the total acreage in Albany is tax-exempt. (Albany County Dept. of Management & Budget GIS)

RP-1 Strategy: Work together to develop a strategy for attracting and supporting businesses and start-ups and providing job training, education, and employment.(Interrelated Strategies: Economy EMP-4, INV-4, INV-5, DIV-2; Social ED-2, ED-3; Housing and Neighborhoods NS-3; Institutions RP-3, RP-4)

Actions:

- a. Implement the institutional recommendations of Capitalize Albany (the City's economic development strategy), including strengthening relationships with state government and other institutions to foster development and neighborhood revitalization.
- b. Partner with organizations in major employment growth sectors (e.g., Albany Nano-Tech), Capitalize Albany Corporation, and Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce to attract and support related businesses and start-ups. This many include implementing incentives such as reduced city fees or the development of business incubator space.
- c. Develop partnerships between higher education institutions (e.g., University of Albany, College of Saint Rose), major employers, and the Albany City School District to increase opportunities for job training and retain college graduates.



The New York State Capitol, overlooking Downtown, is a hotbed of policy and legislative activity.

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RP-2 Strategy: Work together to create, implement, and expand regional plans for multi-modal transportation ,open space networks, and green infrastructure. (Interrelated Strategies: Transportation MM-2, PED-2, BIC-2; Natural Resources NH-1, OS-1; Institutions RP-3, RP-4)

Actions:

- a. Support New Visions 2030, a regional multi-modal transportation plan, in partnership with the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), the Capital District Transportation Authority, and local governments, to prioritize regional multi-modal transportation networks. As a component of Albany’s Vision that extends beyond the City limits, creating early regional partnerships will improve the likelihood of implementing and funding projects.
- b. Support Tech Valley Trails, a regional open space network plan, to prioritize green networks (e.g., greenways, habitat, trails, riparian buffers, open space, etc.) in partnership with the CDRPC, local and state governments, and local conservation organizations.

RP-3 Strategy: Create and maintain open lines of communication and cooperation between and among institutions. (Interrelated Strategies: Institutions RP-1, RP-5, RP-6, FP-1, FP-2, FP-3, FP-5)

Actions:

- a. Develop a regional government coordination group that includes representatives of the City of Albany, nearby municipalities, county, and state government to discuss regional trends, economic development, and other issues.
- b. Strengthen communication between institutions and City government and seek ways to collaborate on strategies (e.g., brownfield redevelopment, preventative health measures, access to healthy foods, college/public school mentoring, etc.).
- c. Increase coordination and partnerships between universities and the City of Albany to support the City’s sustainability and revitalization strategies (e.g., planning and technology departments of local universities and city departments).

RP-4 Strategy: Position the City as a leader in regional cooperation. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy DIV-3; Social SS-6; Institutions RP-1, RP-2, FP-2, FP-5)

Actions:

- a. Form a regional Task Force with the Capital District Transportation Committee, Capital District Regional Planning Commission, and other municipalities to improve regional planning and implement regional multi-modal transportation, open space, and sustainability plans. As the largest municipality in the Capital District, the City of Albany can take a leadership role in the cooperation efforts, including the convening of this regional government coordination group.
- b. Identify opportunities for shared services with local governments, state agencies, not-for-profits, and institutions.

RP-5 Strategy: Work together to revitalize downtown and key neighborhood mixed-use nodes. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-4; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-3, NI-4, PS-5, NS-1; Institutions FP-1)

Actions:

- a. Support and encourage institutional investment in downtown and key neighborhood mixed-use nodes through incentives and public-private partnerships.
- b. Explore the creation of a Downtown investment fund to support revitalization efforts.



Opportunities for collaboration and partnerships emerge as the University at Albany evolves and expands.

RP-6 Strategy: Enhance data-sharing partnerships with institutions. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy DIV-1; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-5; Utilities and Infrastructure COM-1, COM-2)

Actions:

- a. Identify City and Institutional data needs and opportunities to share data to reduce replication and error.
- b. Formalize data-sharing opportunities with local institutions.
- c. Work together to analyze data in order to develop City and institutional strategies to achieve mutual goals.

FACILITIES AND PROJECTS

Albany's concentration of institutions includes numerous facilities (e.g., university campuses, hospitals, and public buildings) that serve as centers of learning, provide community services, and offer employment opportunities to the community.

Goal:

Work together to ensure that government and institutional facilities and projects promote mutual benefits.

Strategies and Actions:

- FP-1 Communicate the benefits of development and growth in the city.
- FP-2 Coordinate with State, County, and regional agencies in the development review process.
- FP-3 Work together to reduce potential negative impacts of institutional projects.
- FP-4 Improve public access to institutional facilities and open spaces.
- FP-5 Work with institutions on climate change planning.
- FP-6 Encourage Institutions to locate in, remain in and revitalize City of Albany neighborhoods including Downtown.

BEST PRACTICES: BOSTON PILOT TASK FORCE

In 2009, the City of Boston created a Task Force to study the relationship between the city and tax-exempt institutions (e.g., major universities and hospitals). In Boston, most tax-exempt, land-owning institutions make a voluntary payment in-lieu-of taxes to the City to help cover the cost of police, fire, and snow removal. However, contributions varied widely between institutions. The Task Force found that the core principles of a fair and balanced program are transparency and consistency. The group recommended keeping the voluntary system, applying a PILOT Program to all non-profit groups (with an exception for small organizations), basing contributions on the value of real estate, recognizing and qualifying PILOT Credits for community benefits, and phasing in the system.

<http://www.cityofboston.gov/assessing/PILOT.asp>

FP-1 Strategy: Communicate the ways in which development and growth in the City benefit or impact all institutions, levels of government, and surrounding municipalities. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-2; Institutions RP-3, FP-2, FP-6)

Actions:

- a. Study and share information about the costs and benefits of proposed government and institutional projects. As the impacts of potential projects are determined, work with institutions and surrounding municipalities to reduce negative impacts.

FP-2 Strategy: Coordinate with State, County, and regional agencies in the project review procedures of developments and projects likely to cause land use, transportation, and environmental impacts beyond the political boundaries in which they occur (i.e., developments of regional impact or DRIs). (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-2; Institutions RP-4, FP-3)

Actions:

- a. Form a Task Force of City, State, County, and regional agencies that meets on an as-needed basis to review developments of regional impact.

FP-3 Strategy: Work together to reduce the possible negative impacts of institutional facilities and projects on their surrounding community. (Interrelated Strategies: Housing and Neighborhoods NI-4, Institutions RP-3, FP-2, FP-1, FP-3)

Actions:

- a. Create neighborhood-level forums to address potential plans and impacts of institutions on adjacent neighborhoods. Encourage institutions to work with the City and community stakeholders early in the project planning phase to address potential concerns. Potential negative impacts include conflicts between institutional expansion and surrounding neighborhoods (e.g., traffic concerns, higher density adjacent to lower density neighborhoods).
- b. Work with the State Office of General Services (OGS) to encourage state offices to locate in existing downtown buildings and consider adaptive reuse/opportunities for historic preservation. Currently many employees at Albany's major employment centers (e.g., SUNY, Albany Nanotech Complex, Empire State Plaza) have little incentive to patronize businesses outside of their office complexes. However, when buildings are integrated into the existing urban fabric, there are opportunities for employees to support nearby retailers and restaurants at lunch and after hours.

Community Form
Economy
Social
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- c. Integrate the development of Harriman Research and Technology Park and the proposed Albany Convention Center with the surrounding urban context of Downtown, historic neighborhoods, and nearby institutions. These large economic development projects provide the opportunity to establish linkages between downtown and new employment centers, encourage spinoff development, and create employment opportunities.

FP-4 Strategy: Improve and enhance public access to institutional facilities and open spaces. (Interrelated Strategies: Social CHR-8, SS-6; Institutions RP-2, FP-2)

Actions:

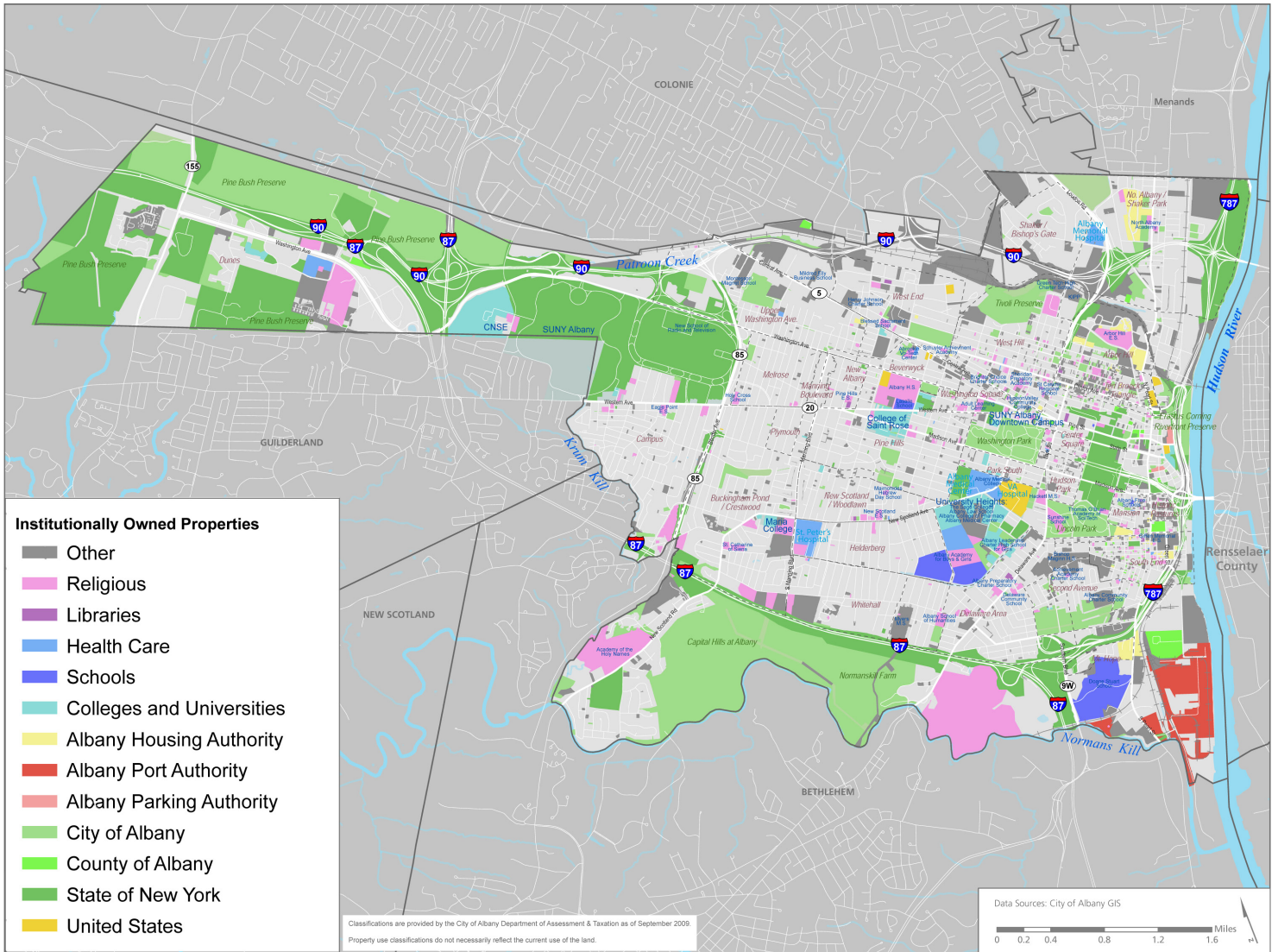
- Increase opportunities for comfortable public gathering areas and plazas adjacent to or within institutional facilities (e.g., Empire State Plaza, educational campuses) through signage, programming, greening or enhanced amenities.
- Improve connections (e.g., sidewalks, signage, trails, bicycle paths, etc.) between institutional facilities, surrounding neighborhoods, and the waterfront.
- Expand access to the existing network of community facilities and strengthen linkages between health care and social service organizations. Albany has a strong network of health care providers and hospitals. Health care organizations should connect with and support social service providers to improve access to services for residents (e.g., housing assistance, family counseling, preventative health services, etc.) and more efficiently serve a wider audience.

FP-5 Work with institutions on climate change planning. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-5; Institutions RP-4)

Actions:

- Work with institutions to establish greenhouse gas reduction targets and climate action plans.
- Work with institutions to evaluate emergency preparedness plans and how to cooperate with the City's emergency preparedness plan. Evaluation may take the form of scenario planning.
- Work with institutions to help them reduce their climate change-related impacts and adapt to climate change through information sharing, data collection, and initiatives, such as a Green Institutions Challenge.

Map 13 Institutionally Owned Properties



FP-6 Encourage Institutions to locate in, remain in and revitalize City of Albany neighborhoods including Downtown. (Interrelated Strategies: Economy INV-2; Social ED-1; Housing and Neighborhoods NI-4; Institutions RP-5, FP-1)

Actions:

- a. Identify institutional space and facility needs and match them with underutilized properties in the City.
- b. Identify opportunities for the re-use of underutilized properties for educational purposes associated with regional institutions.

FISCAL IMPACTS

The fiscal impacts of institutions addresses tax-exempt properties, payments in-lieu of taxes, and recognizing and qualifying the community benefits of different organizations. See Map 13 for a map of tax-exempt properties in Albany.

The City has the burden of being an undercompensated seat of government and an undercompensated urban area; while at the same time providing a high level of services to a largely tax-exempt property base and shouldering the cost of city services centrally so that they are available to all who need them.

Goal:

Address the positive and negative impacts of government and institutional expansion on the City's tax base.

Strategies and Actions:

FI-1 Work together to establish a comprehensive system for implementing PILOTs.

FI-2 Communicate how development and growth in the city benefit or impact all institutions.

FI-3 Assess and lobby for appropriate recommendations outlined in the 2010 Capital Punishment: an analysis of the fiscal impact of State government policies and tax-exempt properties on the City of Albany.

FI-1 Strategy: Work together to establish a system for implementing PILOTs (payment in-lieu of taxes) agreements. (Interrelated Strategies: Institutions RP-3, FP-2, FP-3)

Actions:

- a. Partner with the state government, higher education institutions, and other tax-exempt institutions to design a comprehensive and fair approach for implementing PILOTs. PILOTs are federal, state, or institutional payments to local governments to help offset losses in property taxes due to nontaxable properties. Agreements are often negotiated between the tax-exempt organizations and local government. Such a system helps to compensate governments for loss of property tax revenue due to a property's tax-exempt status.

FI-2 Strategy: Communicate the ways in which development and growth in the City benefit or impact all institutions, levels of government, and surrounding municipalities. (Interrelated Strategies: Institutions RP-3, FP-2, FP-1, FP-3)

Actions:

- a. Study and share information about the fiscal impacts of tax-exempt institutional development (e.g., loss of taxes from converting residential property to institutional uses compared with job growth).

FI-3 Assess and lobby for appropriate recommendations outlined in the 2010 Capital Punishment: an analysis of the fiscal impact of State government policies and tax-exempt properties on the City of Albany. (Interrelated Strategies: Institutions FP-3, FP-1, FP-2)

Actions:

- a. Lobby New York State for appropriate AIM Equity Payments, Empire State Plaza and Harriman PILOTs and Capital City service agreements to reduce the fiscal burden on the City.

Sustainability Building Blocks: The Comprehensive Plan Systems

Community Form

Economy

Social

Transportation

Natural Resources

Housing and Neighborhoods

Utilities and Infrastructure

Institutions

Systems Interrelationships



- Community Form
- Economy
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- Utilities and Infrastructure
- Institutions









Systems Interrelationships

3.9 Systems Interrelationships

Throughout this chapter, strategies that are similar to and overlap with other strategies have been identified and linked to allow the reader to easily navigate interconnections between different systems. Although some degree of connection and influence can be found among all the strategies, the interconnections have been determined based on having a direct reference to key terms, concepts, and techniques that are common among the strategies. For example, strategy OS-3 in the Natural Resources System refers to promoting local and sustainable food production, which is directly related to strategies for promoting healthy food choices through local food production and providing access to fresh local food in the Social System (CHR-3) and Housing and Neighborhood System (NS-3).

Table 1 identifies the specific system interconnections, which are a key criterion used in developing and prioritizing implementation projects (see Chapter 4). Other criteria (described further in Chapter 4) include alignment with community priorities, interconnection with other key planning initiatives (e.g., Brownfield Opportunities and Climate Action plans), and leverage points (i.e., that can most effectively generate desired change throughout the system).

Systems Legend

	Community Form		Natural Resources
	Economy		Housing and Neighborhoods
	Social		Utilities and Infrastructure
	Transportation		Institutions

Numerous perspectives, stakeholders and interests play out on the Albany landscape. Albany 2030 brings these diverse themes together to identify priorities that can affect system-wide change.

Table 1 Systems Interrelationships Matrix



	COMMUNITY FORM									Total	
	LU-1	Develop a Future Land Use Framework Map to guide land use decisions	LU-2 UD-1 UD-2 UD-3	INV-1 INV-3	CHR-2	MM-1 MM-2 TR-2	WW-3 NH-2	HDC-2 HDC-6 HDC-8 NS-1 NS-2	EN-3		18
	LU-2	Land-use transportation connection	LU-1 UD-1 UD-3	INV-1	CHR-5	MM-2 TR-2	AQ-1	HDC-2 NS-2	EN-3	RP-2	12
	LU-3	Vacant and abandoned properties reuse	ARCH-2		PS-1 AC-6			NI-1 HDC-9			5
	LU-4	Remediate brownfields to restore vacant, contaminated properties	ARCH-3				WW-4 TS-2				3
	UD-1	Create design guidelines and a design review process	UD-3			MM-2 TR-2		HDC-8 NI-2 NS-2	EN-3 SW-4		8
	UD-2	Improve waterfront and downtown connections		INV-2		MM-2	WW-5				3
	UD-3	Create multi-modal design guidelines	LU-2 UD-1	INV-1	CHR-2 PS-2	MM-1 MM-2 TR-1 VEH-4			EN-3		10
	ARCH-1	Create a historic preservation plan	ARCH-2	INV-2				NI-2			3
	ARCH-2	Vacant and abandoned properties reuse	LU-3		PS-1 AC-6			NI-1			4
	ARCH-3	Adaptively reuse historic and non-historic structures in brownfields remediation projects	LU-4				WW-4 TS-2				3



	ECONOMY								Total
EMP-1	Increase access to jobs		EMP-2 EMP-3 EMP-5 INV-1		TR-3		NS-2	EN-3	7
EMP-2	Increase job opportunities for all residents		EMP-1 EMP-3 INV-1 INV-2					RP-1	5
EMP-3	Provide training and continuing education		EMP-1 EMP-2 DIV-2	ED-3				RP-1	5
EMP-4	Target regional growth industries		EMP-1 EMP-2	ED-3				RP-1	4
EMP-5	Coordinate economic development and energy/sustainability efforts		EMP-1					EN-1 EN-4	3
INV-1	Make Albany attractive for business development	LU-2 LU-4 UD-1 ARCH-1 ARCH-3	EMP-1	CHR-7	MM-2 TR-2 TR-3 VEH-2	WW-4 TS-2	HDC-2.b. HDC-5 NI-1 NI-2 NS-2 NS-6	EN-3	20
INV-2	Encourage investment in urban land and buildings for employment and housing	UD-2 LU-1 LU-3 ARCH-1 ARCH-2	INV-1	CHR-7 AC-4	MM-2 PED-2 BIC-2		NI-1 NI-2 HDC-2 HDC-3 HDC-4 HDC-5 NS-1	FP-1 FP-2 FP-6	21
INV-3	Reinforce, enhance and promote Albany's distinctive character and identity	UD-1 ARCH-1 ARCH-2 ARCH-3		PS-1 PS-3 PS-4 PS-7			NS-1		9
INV-4	Foster coalitions and community-initiated economic development partnerships		INV-1				NI-2 NS-3	RP-1 RP-5	5
INV-5	Provide a foundation for economic activity			ED-2			NS-3	RP-1 FP-5	4
DIV-1	Increase economic diversity			AC-4			NS-1		2
DIV-2	Identify high value, high probability sectors for targeted intervention		EMP-3	ED-2				RP-1	3
DIV-3	Develop an "adaptive management" approach							RP-1 RP-4 RP-6	3



	SOCIAL									Total
ED-1	Champion urban education in Albany			ED-2 ED-3					FP-6	3
ED-2	Increase partnerships between institutions and the business community		EMP-3 DIV-2						RP-1	3
ED-3	Increase partnerships with higher education		EMP-3 EMP-4						RP-1	3
ED-4	Support and partner with existing arts and cultural organizations			AC-1 AC-2 AC-3 AC-4 AC-5						5
ED-5	Extend digital literacy programs							COM-2		1
CHR-1	Improve connections between neighborhoods and recreation facilities			CHR-6 CHR-7			NS-4			3
CHR-2	Promote walkable neighborhoods and complete streets				MM-1 BIC-1	AQ-1				3
CHR-3	Increase access to healthy food options			CHR-9		OS-2 OS-3	NI-3 NS-7			5
CHR-4	Partner with healthcare institutions to promote preventative health measures			CHR-9						1
CHR-5	Increase multi-modal connections to healthcare institutions	LU-2			MM-2					2
CHR-6	Provide intergenerational opportunities for recreation			CHR-1						1
CHR-7	Increase opportunities for recreational use of the Hudson River		INV-2 INV-1	CHR-1	MM-2 PED-2 TR-3	OS-1				7
CHR-8	Improve and enhance public access to institutional open spaces								FP-4	1





	SOCIAL									Total
	CHR-9	Develop active design guidelines to promote physical activity and health	UD-1 UD-2 UD-3							3
	PS-1	Remove blighting influences	LU-3 ARCH-2	INV-3	AC-6			NI-1		5
	PS-2	Promote walkable neighborhoods and complete streets	UD-3	INV-3		MM-1				3
	PS-3	Expand and promote neighborhood watch		INV-3				NS-5		2
	PS-4	Focus on a community policing method		INV-3				NS-5		2
	PS-5	Partner with the New York State Police to address the regional nature of crime		INV-3					RP-5	2
	PS-6	Enhance resiliency against natural events				OS-3	HDC-11	EN-1		3
	PS-7	Utilize crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED)		INV-3				HDC-5		2
	AC-1	Promote cultural identity			ED-4					1
	AC-2	Make art education available at all school levels			ED-4					1
	AC-3	Foster opportunities for public art			ED-4					1
	AC-4	Strengthen the City's arts and cultural districts		INV-2 DIV-1	ED-4 AC-6 AC-7			HDC-5		6
	AC-5	Enhance access to arts and cultural facilities			ED-4					1
	AC-6	Provide opportunities for live-work space for artists	LU-3 ARCH-2		PS-1			NI-1		4
	AC-7	Create a welcoming atmosphere for artists			AC-4 AC-6			HDC-2		3






	SOCIAL									Total
SS-1	Maintain access to human service agencies, expand service where needed			SS-2 SS-6 SS-7						3
SS-2	Encourage coordinated promotion and access to social services			SS-1 SS-4 SS-5 SS-7						4
SS-3	Focus on strategies for preparing low-income children for K-5 schooling			ED-1 ED-3						2
SS-4	Consider social and environmental equity in all decisions			SS-2 SS-6	TR-3 TR-4					4
SS-5	Foster collaboration between organizations that provide similar services			SS-1 SS-2 SS-7						3
SS-6	Improve and enhance public access to institutional facilities and services			SS-1					RP-4	2
SS-7	Improve and coordinate homelessness assistance programs			SS-1 SS-2 SS-5			HDC-10			4







	TRANSPORTATION									Total
	MM-1	Develop a Complete Streets policy			CHR-2	BIC-1 VEH-4	AQ-1		EN-3 SW-3	6
	MM-2	Land use-transportation connection	LU-2 UD-1 UD-2	INV-1 INV-2	CHR-5 CHR-7	TR-2	AQ-1 WW-5	NS-2	EN-3 RP-2	13
	PED-1	Maintain & improve sidewalk connections						NS-4		1
	PED-2	Expand greenways			CHR-7	BIC-2	OS-1		RP-2	4
	BIC-1	Promote and implement the Bicycle Master Plan			CHR-2	MM-1 VEH-3	AQ-1		EN-3	5
	BIC-2	Connect to regional trails			CHR-1	PED-2	OS-1		RP-2	4
	BIC-3	Educate cyclists and drivers				BIC-1				1
	TR-1	Establish an intermodal transit center	UD-3			TR-3 TR-4 AIR-1	AQ-1			5
	TR-2	Promote Transportation Demand Management to improve transit choices	LU-1 UD-1			VEH-3	AQ-1	NS-2	EN-3	6
	TR-3	Increase transit connectivity		EMP-1 INV-1	CHR-5 CHR-7	TR-1 AIR-1		NS-2	EN-3	8
	TR-4	Explore transit expansion options			SS-4	TR-1 TR-3			EN-3	4



	TRANSPORTATION									Total	
	VEH-1	Improve road infrastructure and reduce congestion				VEH-3 TR-3 TR-4					3
	VEH-2	Implement a comprehensive parking strategy		INV-1				NS-6			2
	VEH-3	Promote Transportation Demand Management to reduce vehicle miles traveled				TR-2	AQ-1		EN-3		3
	VEH-4	Promote efficient, hybrid, or alternative-fueled vehicles	UD-3			MM-1			EN-1		3
	FMP-1	Leverage port assets and integrate with freight rail		INV-2		FMP-2					2
	FMP-2	Modernize the port to accommodate increased demand		INV-2		FMP-1					2
	AIR-1	Maintain and improve connections between the airport and city		INV-1		TR-1 TR-3					3
	AIR-2	Support Albany County Airport Authority efforts to increase direct national connections		INV-1							1



	NATURAL RESOURCES									Total
	WW-1	Implement Long-Term Control Plan to mitigate water quality impacts of CSO's					WW-2		WS-1 SW-1 SW-2	4
	WW-2	Control sources of negative environmental impact					WW-1 WW-3 TS-1		SW-1 WS-3	5
	WW-3	Use zoning and environmental review to protect river and stream corridors					WW-2 TS-1		SW-3 SW-4	4
	WW-4	Remediate brownfields to reduce runoff and water table contamination	LU-4 UD-4 ARCH-3	INV-1			TS-2			5
	WW-5	Improve public access to waterways	UD-2	INV-2		MM-2				3
	WW-6	Encourage water conservation							WS-2 EN-2 EN-4	3
	UF-1	Develop an urban forestry program					AQ-2 UF-2			2
	UF-2	Use zoning and environmental review to protect the urban forest					UF-1 AQ-2			2
	NH-1	Limit encroachment into habitat areas through land use controls				BIC-2 PED-2	NH-2 OS-1		RP-2	5
	NH-2	Implement the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Management Plan					NH-1 NH-3 NH-4			3
	NH-3	Restore and maintain high quality natural habitat areas					NH-1 NH-2 OS-1			3
	NH-4	Use existing environmental education centers to promote habitat protection					NH-2			1
	AQ-1	Provide multi-modal transportation choices to reduce vehicle miles traveled	LU-2 UD-1	INV-1	CHR-2	MM-1 MM-2 BIC-1 TR-1 TR-2 VEH-3		NS-1 NS-2	EN-3	13
	AQ-2	Enhance the urban forest to absorb CO2 and other pollutants					UF-1 UF-2			2



	NATURAL RESOURCES									Total	
	AQ-3	Enforce existing Anti-Idling Policy and expand to cover all modes and sectors				VEH-3 VEH-4					2
	TS-1	Limit encroachment on steep slopes through land use controls							SW-3 SW-4		2
	TS-2	Encourage brownfield development to reduce soil contamination	LU-4 ARCH-3	INV-1			WW-4				4
	OS-1	Expand and connect greenways and trails and link to regional networks			CHR-1 CHR-7	BIC-2 PED-2	NH-1			RP-2	6
	OS-2	Reclaim vacant lots as open space and community gardens			CHR-3		OS-3	NI-3			3
	OS-3	Support local food production			CHR-3		OS-2	NI-3			3








	HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS									Total
HDC-1	Improve the balance between rentals and owner-occupied homes						HDC-2 HDC-3 HDC-4 HDC-7			4
HDC-2	Use zoning as a tool to incentivize a diverse housing stock	LU-1 LU-2	INV-1 INV-2	AC-7			HDC-6 HDC-7			7
HDC-3	Provide and maintain intergenerational/life-cycle housing options		INV-2				HDC-2 HDC-4			3
HDC-4	Develop creative financing tools to encourage mixed-income housing		INV-2				HDC-1 HDC-7			3
HDC-5	Develop a marketing strategy to promote the City's neighborhoods		INV-1 INV-2	PS-7 AC-4			HDC-1 HDC-4			6
HDC-6	Use zoning to incentivize the development of affordable housing	LU-1					HDC-2 HDC-7			3
HDC-7	Encourage mixed-income housing options throughout the City						HDC-1 HDC-2 HDC-3 HDC-4			4
HDC-8	Promote quality affordable housing through design guidelines	LU-1 UD-1					HDC-9			3
HDC-9	Use building and zoning code enforcement to improve housing quality	LU-3					HDC-8			2
HDC-10	Ensure adequate provisions for homelessness prevention, transition and housing			SS-1 SS-2 SS-5 SS-7						4
HDC-11	Increase resilience of housing stock to impacts of climate change						HDC-8 HDC-9	EN-4		3





	HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS									Total
NI-1	Target blighting influences	LU-3 ARCH-2	INV-1 INV-2 INV-3	PS-1 AC-6						7
NI-2	Use zoning and development regulations as a tool for investment	UD-1 ARCH-1 ARCH-2	INV-1 INV-2 INV-4							6
NI-3	Leverage institutional anchors to build neighborhood identity			CHR-3		OS-2			FP-3 RP-5	4
NI-4	Create a partnership between neighborhood associations and institutions						NS-3		FP-3 RP-5 FP-6	4
NI-5	Promote the use of web-based tools for neighborhood information sharing							COM-1 COM-2	RP-6	3
NS-1	Enhance, promote, and strengthen neighborhood commercial centers	LU-1	INV-2 DIV-1						RP-5	4
NS-2	Increase transit connectivity between neighborhoods and employment centers	LU-1 UD-1	EMP-1 INV-1		MM-2 TR-2 TR-3			EN-3		8
NS-3	Partner with institutions to attract investment in surrounding neighborhoods		INV-4				NI-4		RP-1 RP-5	4
NS-4	Locate libraries, schools, parks, and community centers close to neighborhoods			CHR-1	PED-1					2
NS-5	Increase Neighborhood Watch Programs and focus on a community policing method			PS-3 PS-4						2
NS-6	Address parking issues within neighborhoods		INV-1		VEH-2					2
NS-7	Increase access to healthy food options for all neighborhoods			CHR-3		OS-2 OS-3				3



	UTILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE									Total	
	EN-1	Implement the initiatives developed by the Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability and as outlined in the City's Climate Action and Adaptation Plans		EMP-5	PS-6	VEH-4		HDC-11	EN-2 EN-3 EN-4		7
	EN-2	Develop an education program to communicate energy and sustainability goals							EN-1 WS-2 SWM-1		3
	EN-3	Promote Multi-Modal transportation choices to reduce vehicle miles traveled	UD-1	EMP-1 INV-1		MM-1 MM-2 BIC-1 TR-2 TR-3 TR-4 VEH-3	AQ-1	NS-2			12
	EN-4	Incentivize energy-efficiency / renewable energy technologies in construction projects		EMP-5				HDC-11	EN-1		3
	WS-1	Implement Long-Term Control Plan to mitigate water quality impacts of CSO's					WW-1 WW-2		SW-1 SW-2		4
	WS-2	Encourage water conservation					WW-6		EN-2 EN-4		3
	WS-3	Control sources of negative environmental impact					WW-1 WW-2 TS-1		SW-4		4
	WS-4	Assess the feasibility and market for selling excess drinking water to regional towns and municipalities							WS-2	RP-6 RP-2	3
	SW-1	Create a green infrastructure system					WW-1 WW-2		SW-2 SW-3 SW-4 WS-1		6



	UTILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE									Total	
	SW-2	Incorporate green infrastructure practices in the Long Term Control Plan for CSO's					WW-1 WW-2		SW-1		3
	SW-3	Reduce impermeable surfaces through land development regulations				MM-1	WW-2		SW-1 SW-4 WS-3		5
	SW-4	Create Low Impact Development Design Guidelines	UD-1						SW-1 SW-3 WS-3		4
	SWM-1	Maintain and expanding waste reduction, reuse and recycling efforts							EN-1 SWM-2		2
	SWM-2	Explore alternatives for solid waste reduction and disposal							EN-1 SWM-1		2
	COM-1	Improve, develop and maintain communications infrastructure						NI-5	COM-2	RP-6	3
	COM-2	Improve access to communications technology for all residents			ED-5			NI-5	COM-1	RP-6	4



	INSTITUTIONS									Total
RP-1	Work together to attract and support businesses and start-ups		EMP-3 EMP-4 INV-4 INV-5 DIV-2	ED-2 ED-3			NS-3		RP-3 RP-4	10
RP-2	Create, implement and expand regional plans for multi-modal transportation, open space networks, and green infrastructure				MM-2 PED-2 BIC-2	NH-1 OS-1			RP-3 RP-4	7
RP-3	Create and maintain open lines of communication between institutions								RP-1 RP-5 RP-6 FP-1 FP-2 FP-3 FP-5 FI-2	8
RP-4	Position the City as a leader in regional cooperation		DIV-3	SS-6					RP-1 RP-2 FP-2 FP-5	6
RP-5	Work together to revitalize downtown and key neighborhood mixed-use nodes		INV-4	PS-5			NI-3 NI-4 NS-1 NS-3		FP-1	7
RP-6	Enhance data-sharing partnerships with institutions		DIV-1				NI-5	COM-1 COM-2		4
FP-1	Communicate the benefits of development and growth in the city		INV-2						RP-3 FI-2 FP-6	4
FP-2	Coordinate with State, County, and regional agencies in the development review process		INV-2						RP-4 FP-3	3



	INSTITUTIONS									Total
FP-3	Work together to reduce potential negative impacts of institutional projects						NI-4		RP-3 FP-2 FI-1 FI-3	5
FP-4	Improve public access to institutional facilities and open spaces			CHR-8 SS-6					RP-2 FI-2	4
FP-5	Work with institutions on climate change planning		INV-5						RP-4	2
FP-6	Encourage Institutions to locate in, remain in and revitalize City of Albany neighborhoods		INV-2	ED-1			NI-4		RP-5 FP-1	5
FI-1	Work together to establish a comprehensive system for implementing PILOTs								RP-3 FI-2 FI-3	3
FI-2	Communicate how development and growth in the city benefit or impact all institutions								RP-3 FP-2 FI-1 FI-3	4
FI-3	Assess and lobby for appropriate recommendations outlined in the 2010 Capital Punishment report								FP-3 FI-1 FI-2	3

Several strategies are shown to have one or few interconnections. The interconnections displayed here represent direct associations with other strategies throughout the plan, and do not cover the many indirect connections among the full set of Albany 2030 strategies.



CHAPTER 4.0

Plan Implementation

Plans are turned into reality by taking action. The Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan uses a systems approach to develop the direction for Albany's future set by citizens (expressed in the Vision Statement presented in Chapter 2) into strategies and actions (the eight plan systems presented in Chapter 3) and priorities for implementation. Five principles¹⁶ were used to apply the systems approach to development of the Comprehensive Plan in Stage Two of the planning process:

1. Target **interconnections (overlaps and leverage points)** between components to influence system behavior in the desired direction.
2. Build **feedback loops** that generate momentum for positive change.
3. Increase system **resilience**.
4. Create **synergies** between **different levels** of the system hierarchy.
5. Use an **adaptive management** process to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

Principles #2, 3, and 4 were considered in formulating strategies and actions for the plan systems presented in Chapter 3, which also identifies interconnections (specifically overlaps) between systems (principle #1). Chapter 4 lays out a program for plan implementation using principle #1 (overlaps and leverage points) in identifying and prioritizing projects and principles #2 and 5 to inform the monitoring process after plan adoption. It contains three sections:

- Section 4.1 describes the process used to develop and prioritize projects (consisting of combinations or “bundles” of related strategies and actions from Chapter 3) for implementation using system principle #1 and other evaluation criteria.
- Section 4.2 describes the implementation projects, organized into timeframes based on the prioritization process.
- Section 4.3 describes the process proposed to monitor implementation progress following plan adoption.

¹⁶ See Section 1.4 for further explanation of these principles.

State Street blends the old with the new to serve as Downtown's east-west spine.

4.1 Prioritization Process

The system strategies and actions described in Chapter 3 have been integrated into a series of implementation projects that cut across plan systems to produce tangible results in achieving the Albany 2030 Vision. The approach to developing and prioritizing implementation projects includes the following steps:

1. Identify **Community Priorities** (i.e., relative importance of systems and system components for plan implementation based on public input received in Community Forum 3).
2. Identify and quantify **System Overlaps** (i.e., strategies and actions that connect two or more systems).
3. Identify **Leverage Points** (i.e., strategies and actions that will effectuate change across multiple systems and subsystems by targeting deep systemic problems).
4. Use the results of steps 1 to 3 to inform the development of strategies and actions into **Implementation Projects**. Project types include capital, regulatory, planning/program, and partnerships.
5. **Prioritize** Implementation Projects into **short term**, **intermediate term**, and **long term**, and **ongoing** time frames based on the following criteria:
 - Alignment with priorities expressed by citizens in Community Forum 3 and supplemental outreach efforts.
 - Combined strategies and actions that yield the most overlaps among systems.
 - Strategies and actions that can act as leverage points.
 - Intersection with other priority planning initiatives (e.g., the Brownfield Opportunity and Climate Action plans)
 - Leadership capacity, staff capacity, partnerships, and financial capacity.
 - Time required to initiate and complete the project.

Community Priorities (Step 1)

Community priorities are based on the results of Community Forum 3, which was held at the beginning of Stage 2 of the comprehensive planning process to review the Vision Statement generated by the public in Stage 1 and to set the direction for implementation. A series of three public meetings was held over three days in different locations in Albany, supplemented by other means of outreach. To prioritize the Vision Statement com-

ponents and goals as translated into the eight comprehensive plan systems, attendees were first asked to allocate a hypothetical budget of \$100 among the systems and then to break out into groups, each of which addressed an individual plan system. Participants in each group were asked to further allocate the money assigned to the system in the prior exercise to each of the system subcomponents (e.g., land use patterns, urban design, and architectural character for the community form system). The combined and averaged results of these exercises, listed in order of priority, are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Results of Community Forum 3 Budget Allocation Exercise

System	Averaged Funding	Highest Funded Component(s)
Housing and Neighborhoods	18.56%	Neighborhood Services
Social	17.24%	Education, Public Safety
Economy	15.49%	Employment, Investment
Utilities and Infrastructure	14.70%	Water and Sewer, Solid Waste
Transportation	12.11%	Pedestrian
Natural Resources	8.77%	Air Quality, Waterways
Community Form	8.21%	Land Use Pattern, Urban Design
Institutions	4.81%	Relationships and Partnerships, Facilities and Projects

The complete results of the Community Forum 3 budget allocation exercise are provided in Appendix D.

Systems Overlaps (Step 2)

System overlaps are strategies and actions that connect different plan systems (e.g., community form and transportation strategies that promote compact, walkable development and alternatives to auto use). Overlaps between the strategies and actions of different systems are presented in the Systems Interrelationships Matrix (Section 3.9, Table 1). As indicated in the matrix, the strategies with the most overlaps include:

As indicated in the matrix, the strategies with the most overlaps include:

- **Economy INV-2:** Encourage investment in urban land and buildings for employment and housing (21 overlaps)
- **Economy INV-1:** Make Albany attractive for business development (19 overlaps)
- **Community Form LU-1:** Develop a Land Use Framework Map to guide land use decisions (18 overlaps)
- **Transportation MM-2:** Coordinate transportation investments to support preferred land uses (13 overlaps)
- **Natural Resources AQ-1:** Provide multi-modal transportation choices to reduce vehicle miles traveled to improve air quality (13 overlaps)
- **Utilities and Infrastructure EN-3:** Promote multi-modal transportation choices to reduce vehicle miles traveled to reduce energy use and mitigate climate change (11 overlaps)

Based on the number of system overlaps, projects involving business development, investment, and multi-modal transportation are clear priorities for implementation. However, addressing overlaps is not sufficient in and of itself to change Albany's trajectory towards the Vision Statement, and the number of overlaps between systems is only one of the criteria used to develop and prioritize implementation projects. Others include alignment with community priorities (Step 1), leverage points (Step 3), and additional factors used to further prioritize projects for implementation (e.g., intersection with other planning initiatives such as the Brownfield Opportunities and Climate Action plans).

LEVERAGE POINTS (STEP 3)

Leverage points are places where intervention can most effectively bring about change throughout the system. In Albany, the leverage points relate to four interrelated **keys** to achieving the Vision Statement:

1. **Improve Albany's image and quality of life:** Change Albany's reputation in the region and beyond to become known as a great place to live, visit, and do business by building on assets, marketing positive attributes, and countering negative perceptions (particularly related to schools and public safety).
2. **Increase fiscal capacity:** Provide quality, cost-effective City public facilities and services by increasing the tax base and seeking equitable revenue contributions from tax-exempt institutions.
3. **Facilitate and mobilize private investment:** Remove barriers and provide incentives for infill development, adaptive reuse, and redevelopment, and leverage institutional resources to attract private investment.

4. **Establish Albany's reputation as a Green Community:** Employ green development and operational practices that protect natural resources, enhance opportunities for physical activity and reduce energy consumption.

These keys were developed by analyzing and synthesizing input received from the public and community stakeholders, as well as data on existing conditions and trends, to identify broad "strategic directions" for accomplishing the deeper systemic changes needed if the Albany citizens vision in the year 2030 is to be realized. Leverage points were identified to inform development and prioritization of implementation projects by asking and answering two questions for each key:

- What must change in Albany as a system to make the key happen?
- Which strategies target the needed changes?

Key 1. Improve Albany's image and quality of life

What must change in Albany as a system to make the key happen?

- The population must stabilize; in-migration to the City must increase, out-migration must decrease.
- The number and type of different jobs (job diversity) must increase.
- The poverty rate must decrease.
- The crime rate must continue to decrease and perceptions of crime must be curbed.
- Educational quality must improve, including increased graduation rates, test scores, and closing the achievement gap.
- Vacant, abandoned, and blighted properties must be reused / redeveloped.
- The quality and diversity of housing options must increase.
- Historic and architectural character of neighborhoods must be preserved and restored.

Examples of strategies that target the needed changes:

- Vacant and abandoned properties reuse (LU-3, ARCH-2)
- Improve waterfront and downtown connections (UD-2)
- Adaptively reuse historic and non-historic structures in brownfields remediation projects (ARCH-3)
- Increase jobs for all residents (EMP-2)
- Make Albany attractive for business development (INV-1)

- Reinforce, enhance and promote Albany's distinctive character and identity (INV-3)
- Increase economic diversity (DIV-1)
- Champion urban education in Albany (ED-1)
- Focus on strategies for preparing low-income children for K-5 schooling (SS-3)
- Remove blighting influences (PS-1, NI-3)
- Develop a marketing strategy to promote the City's neighborhoods (HDC-5)
- Work together to attract and support businesses and start-ups (RP-1)

Key 2. Increase fiscal capacity

What must change in Albany as a system to make the key happen?

- The tax base must increase by attracting new private sector businesses and new residents with a range of incomes.
- Tax-exempt properties must provide payments in lieu of taxes to offset financial burden of providing city services to said properties.

Examples of strategies that target the needed changes:

- Target regional growth industries (EMP-4)
- Make Albany attractive for business development (INV-1)
- Encourage investment in urban land and buildings for employment and housing (INV-2)
- Increase economic diversity (DIV-1)
- Identify high value, high probability sectors for targeted intervention (DIV-2)
- Develop creative financing tools to encourage mixed-income housing (HDC-4)
- Develop a marketing strategy to promote the city's neighborhoods and downtown (HDC-5, INV-1, INV-2)
- Enhance, promote, and strengthen neighborhood commercial centers (NS-1)
- Work together to attract and support businesses and start-ups (RP-1)
- Work together to establish a comprehensive system for implementing PILOTs (FI-1)

Key 3. Facilitate and mobilize private investment

What must change in Albany as a system to make the key happen?

- Land development regulations must be fair, transparent, and easy to navigate to attract developers and investors.
- Taxes must not be prohibitively high so as to discourage private investment.
- Commercial, office, and residential lease properties must be of high enough quality to attract tenants.
- Transportation infrastructure must be able to support a range of commuters.
- Albany 's quality of life must become more attractive for private investors.

Examples of strategies that target the needed changes:

- Improve waterfront and downtown connections (UD-2)
- Make Albany attractive for business development (INV-1)
- Encourage investment in urban land and buildings for employment and housing (INV-2)
- Provide a foundation for economic activity (INV-5)
- Increase transit connectivity (TR-3)
- Implement a comprehensive parking strategy (VEH-2)
- Modernize the port to accommodate increased demand (FP-2)
- Develop creative financing tools to encourage mixed-income housing (HDC-4)
- Market the city's neighborhoods and downtown (HDC-5, INV-1, INV-2)
- Work together to attract and support businesses and start-ups (PR-1)
- Improve, develop and maintain communications infrastructure (COM-1)

Key 4. Establish Albany's reputation as a Green Community

What must change in Albany as a system to make the key happen?

- Energy consumption, and corresponding greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), must be reduced.
- Vehicle miles traveled must be reduced.
- Natural resources, including waterways, open space, natural habitats, wetlands, steep slopes, and trees must be protected and enhanced.
- Municipal solid waste disposal must be reduced.

Examples of strategies that target the needed changes:

- Coordinate transportation investments to support preferred land uses (LU-2, MM-2)
- Promote and implement the Bicycle Master Plan (BIC-1)
- Increase transit connectivity (TR-3)
- Implement Long-Term Control Plan to mitigate water quality impacts of CSO's (WW-1, WS-1)
- Use zoning and environmental review to protect environmental resources (WW-3, UF-2, NH-1)
- Develop an urban forestry program (UF-1)
- Provide multi-modal transportation choices to reduce vehicle miles traveled (AQ-1, EN-3)
- Implement the initiatives of the Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability Program (EN-1)
- Create a green infrastructure system (SW-1)
- Maintain and expand waste reduction, reuse and recycling efforts (SWM-1)

For the purpose of the prioritization process, strategies that repeat across multiple keys to achieving the Vision Statement are considered to have greater potential effect as leverage points than strategies that only address one key. Identifying leverage points in combination with system overlaps (Step 2) and community priorities (Step 1) provides the basis for developing and prioritizing the implementation projects presented in Section 4.2. For example, two Economy strategies (INV-1 and INV-2) address several of the keys and also have the highest number of overlaps per the Systems Interrelationships Matrix. The Economy system was also given the second highest priority, with Investment ranking a close second to Employment among its system components, in the Community Forum 3 budget allocation exercise. Other overlaps and community priorities can be found among strategies for marketing the city's assets and neighborhoods, reducing blight and targeting vacant/abandoned properties, and increasing multi-modal transportation opportunities, among others.

4.2 Implementation Projects

Table 3 identifies projects that “bundle” the system strategies and actions from Chapter 3 into implementation projects that can be accomplished by the City or its partner organizations (step 4 of the prioritization process). Four types of projects are included:

- **Capital** projects are physical development projects that will require significant financial investments to implement.
- **Regulatory** projects involve changes to zoning and development regulations, standards, and processes.
- **Planning/Program** projects involve preparation and implementation of more detailed, issue or area-focused plans and programs.
- **Partnership** projects require the involvement of other agencies and organizations to implement.

The projects are divided into the following timeframes based on priority and other considerations such as resources and time required for implementation:

- Short term (initiate within 2 years from plan adoption)
- Intermediate term (initiate within 2-5 years from plan adoption)
- Long term (initiate within 5-10 years from plan adoption)
- Ongoing (new programs or continuation of existing ones that would operate throughout the 20-year implementation period)

Other information presented in Table 3 includes references to applicable strategies from Chapter 3, the total number of system interconnections based on the applicable strategies and their interconnections tabulated in Table 1, the targeted “keys to achieving the Vision Statement” used to determine Leverage Points, the party or parties responsible for implementation, partnership agencies and organizations, and potential funding sources. Descriptions of the individual projects are presented after Table 3.

Table 3 Implementation Project Prioritization

Short Term Projects		Project Type	Applicable System Strategies	System Interconnections	Targeted Keys	Lead Agency	Partnerships	Potential Funding Source(s)
ST-1	Create a Capital Improvement Program (CIP)	Planning / Program	LU-2, PS-2, EMP-4, INV-2, MM-1, MM-2, PED-1, HDC-3, HDC-4, HDC-7, TR-1, TR-3, AQ-1, CHR-2, BIC-1, VEH-3, EN-3	120	Key 2	Albany Mayor's Office	All city departments	Staff Resources
ST-2	Establish base-line Citywide Community Assessments	Planning / Program	HDC-1, HDC-2, HDC-3, HDC-4, HDC-5, HDC-6, HDC-7, HDC-8, HDC-9, NI-1, NI-2, NI-3, NI-4, NS-1, NS-2, NS-3, NS-4, NS-5, NS-6, NS-7	79	Key 1	Albany Dept. of Development and Planning	City departments, CDRPC, SUNY, neighborhood associations	Staff Resources
ST-3	Hire a marketing consultant to develop a city-wide marketing strategy	Planning / Program	HDC-5, INV-1, INV-2, AC-4, EN-2, INV-3, ED-1, CHR-4, AC-1, BIC-3, TR-2, WW-6, NH-4	77	Key 3	Albany Dept. of Development and Planning, Capitalize Albany Corporation	Downtown BID, Lark Street BID, Central BID, Empire State Development Corp., Albany-Colonie Chamber of Commerce, local institutions, City Historian, Albany Convention Center and Visitors Bureau, Partners for Albany Stories	Partner cost-share
ST-4	Develop a system for inter-departmental and community data sharing to improve government efficiency	Capital / Partnership	INV-2, RP-1, RP-3, RP-5, FP-2, FI-1, HDC-9	49	Key 2	Albany Office of the Treasurer	City departments, key institutions (Albany School District, colleges and universities, major industries, Chamber of Commerce, Albany County, state departments, etc.)	NYS Archives LGRMIF grant

Short Term Projects		Project Type	Applicable System Strategies	System Interconnections	Targeted Keys	Lead Agency	Partnerships	Potential Funding Source(s)
ST-5	Develop a Comprehensive Urban Agricultural Plan	Planning / Program	CHR-3, OS-2, OS-3, NI-3, NS-7, EMP-2, INV-2, DIV-1	47	Key 1	Albany Dept. of Development and Planning	Albany County Office of Natural Resource Conservation, the Food Trust, local farmers markets, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County, Capital District Community Gardens, Albany County Dept. of Health	USDA Community Food Projects (CFP) Grant Program, partner contribution, private foundation, Albany County Dept. of Health
ST-6	Create a PILOT task force and implement a fair and consistent PILOT program	Planning / Program	FI-1, RP-3, FI-2, FI-3, EMP-4, ED-3, CHR-5, CHR-8, TR-4, HDC-1, NI-3, NI-4, NS-3	45	Key 2	Albany Mayor's Office, Common Council	NYS Office of General Services, Albany County, Albany School District, SUNY, College of St. Rose, Albany Law School, Albany Medical College, Albany College of Pharmacy, Sage Colleges, Albany Medical Center, Albany Memorial Hospital, Albany Veteran's Hospital, St. Peter's Hospital, Albany Housing Authority	Volunteer members, partner staff resources
ST-7	Create an Access to Healthy Foods program	Planning / Program	CHR-3, OS-2, OS-3, NI-3, NS-7	19	Key 1	Albany Dept. of Development and Planning	Albany County Department of Health, The Food Trust, Low Income Investment Fund, local farmers markets, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County, Capital District Community Gardens, local community garden associations	Partner cost-share, partner technical assistance, USDA Community Food Project, NYS Healthy Foods, Healthy Communities Fund

Short Term Projects		Project Type	Applicable System Strategies	System Interconnections	Targeted Keys	Lead Agency	Partnerships	Potential Funding Source(s)
ST-8	Expand the current street tree management plan into a comprehensive urban forestry program	Planning / Program	UF-1, UF-2, AQ-2	6	Key 1 Key 4	Albany Dept. of General Services	Albany Dept. of Development and Planning, local institutions	NY DEC Urban and Community Forestry Grant, partner contribution, volunteers
Inter-mediate Term Projects		Project Type	Applicable System Strategies	System Interconnections	Targeted Keys	Lead Agency	Partnerships	Potential Funding Source(s)
IT-1	Prepare a comprehensive update to the city's zoning ordinance	Regulatory	LU-1, LU-2, LU-3, UD-1, ARCH-2, INV-1, INV-2, INV-4, AC-7, MM-2, HDC-2, HDC-6, HDC-9, NI-2, WW-3, UF-2	132	Key 1 Key 3	Albany Dept. of Development and Planning	Common Council, Board of Zoning Appeals, Planning Board, Historic Resources Commission, Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability, neighborhood associations, community stakeholders, Division of Building and Codes, Corporation Counsel	HUD grant, Hudson River Valley Greenway
IT-2	Create and implement a comprehensive waterfront development strategy for the Hudson River waterfront	Planning / Program	UD-2, CHR-1, CHR-7, INV-1, INV-2, MM-2, WW-5, PED-2, TR-3, OS-1, FMP-1, FMP-2	91	Key 1 Key 3	Albany Dept. of Development and Planning, Albany Port District Commission	Dept. of General Services, NYS Office of General Services, Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability, Albany County, Albany Rowing Center, Hudson River Valley Greenway, NYS DOT, USS Slater, Downtown BID, neighborhood associations, Albany County Convention and Visitors Bureau, City of Rensselaer	NYS DOS – LWRP, Hudson River Valley Greenway

Inter-mediate Term Projects		Project Type	Applicable System Strategies	System Interconnections	Targeted Keys	Lead Agency	Partnerships	Potential Funding Source(s)
IT-3	Create a Strategic Arts Welcoming program	Planning / Program	LU-3, ARCH-2, ED-4, PS-1, AC-4, AC-6, AC-7, INV-2, DIV-1, HDC-2, NI-1	69	Key 1 Key 3	Local non-profit	Local arts and cultural organizations, Albany BARN, SUNY Art Dept., College of St. Rose Center for Art and Design, Sage Colleges Visual Art Program, Downtown BID, Lark Street BID, Central BID, NYS Council on the Arts (NYSCA), Dept. of Development and Planning	Partner cost-share, NYSCA Planning Grant
IT-4	Grow and strengthen the local Small Business Development Community	Planning / Program	EMP-1, EMP-2, INV-1, INV-2, DIV-1, DIV-2	57	Key 3	Capitalize Albany Corporation	Albany Center for Economic Success, Albany-Colonie Chamber of Commerce, New York Small Business Development Center, Center for Economic Growth, Capital District Community Loan Fund	NYS Entrepreneurial Assistance Program, partner technical assistance
IT-5	Develop a commercial / office space reuse plan and program	Planning / Program	INV-1, INV-2, ARCH-1, ARCH-2, HDC-7, NI-2	57	Key 3	Capitalize Albany Corporation	Downtown BID, Lark Street BID, Central BID, Dept. of Development and Planning, local realtors, private developers, property owners	Staff resources, partner cost-share
IT-6	Develop a complete streets plan, policy, and design guidelines.	Policy / Regulatory	CHR-2, MM-1, BIC-1, AQ-1, SW-3, EN-3	43	Key 1 Key 4	Department of Development and Planning, Department of General Services, Division of Traffic Safety	NYS DOT, CDTC, CDTA, BIDs	NY DOT SAF-ETEA-LU; NY DOT TIGER II Discretionary Grant Program

Inter-mediate Term Projects		Project Type	Applicable System Strategies	System Interconnections	Targeted Keys	Lead Agency	Partnerships	Potential Funding Source(s)
IT-7	Develop a green infrastructure system	Planning / Capital	WW-1, WW-6, EN-1, WS-1, WS-2, WS-3, SW-1, SW-2, SW-3, SW-4	39	Key 1 Key 4	Albany Dept. of Water and Water Supply, Albany Dept. of General Services - Division of Engineering	Mayor's office of Energy and Sustainability, Albany County Dept. for Economic Development, Conservation and Planning, CDRPC, Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District, Division of Building and Codes, NYS DEC, NYS DOT	NYS DEC Water Quality Management Planning Projects, NYS DEC Water Quality Improvement Project Program; US EPA Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Grant, NYS Environmental Facilities Corp
IT-8	Create an "Albany Local" buy local/use local program	Planning / Program	EMP-1, INV-2, DIV-1	30	Key 1 Key 3	Albany Dept. of Development and Planning, Capitalize Albany Corporation	Capital Region Local First, Albany Office of Special Events, BIDS, local employers, neighborhood associations, Albany Office of the Treasurer, local institutions	Partner technical assistance and cost-share, USDA
IT-9	Develop a city-wide parking management strategy	Planning / Regulatory	INV-1, VEH-2, NS-6	23	Key 3	Albany Parking Authority, Division of Traffic Safety	Downtown BID, Lark Street BID, Central BID, NY Office of General Services, SUNY, College of St. Rose, neighborhood associations, Dept. of Development and Planning, Capitalize Albany Corporation	Staff resources, partner cost-share

Long Term Projects		Project Type	Applicable System Strategies	System Interconnections	Targeted Keys	Lead Agency	Partnerships	Potential Funding Source(s)
LT-1	Develop intermodal transit centers	Capital	UD-3, MM-1, TR-1, TR-3, TR-4, AIR-1, AQ-1	49	Key 1 Key 4	CDTA, Albany Convention Center Authority, Dept. of Development and Planning	CDTC, Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability, NY Office of General Services, Amtrak, Adirondack Trailways, Greyhound, Albany County Airport Authority	NY DOT SAF-EETA-LU, NY DOT TIGER II Discretionary Grant Program, NY DOT TIP
LT-2	Work with the State of New York to research and pilot a model urban rehabilitation building code	Regulatory	ARCH-1, ARCH-2, INV-2, NI-2	34	Key 3	Albany Division of Building and Codes	Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability, NY Dept. of State	Staff Resources
LT-3	Develop context appropriate design guidelines, manuals and pattern books.	Planning / Regulatory	UD-1, INV-3, HDC-8	20	Key 1	Albany Dept. of Development and Planning	Neighborhood stakeholders, Albany Division of Building and Codes, Educational Institutions	HUD, NYS Council of the Arts, partner in-kind services

Ongoing Programs		Project Type	Applicable System Strategies	System Interconnections	Targeted Keys	Lead Agency	Partnerships	Potential Funding Source(s)
O-1	Establish a formal lobbying presence at the State and Federal level	Partnership	FI-1, FI-3, INV-1, INV-4, ED-1, EN-1, NS-3, MM-1, MM-2, TR-4, RP-1, LU-2, WW-2, AQ-1, OS-1	112	Key 2	Albany Mayor's Office	NYS DOS, NYS Senate and House of Representatives, US Senate and House of Representatives (New York), Albany County	City and stakeholder resources
O-2	Develop a formal Regional Economic Development Program	Partnership	RP-1, EMP-1, EMP-2, EMP-3, EMP-4, EMP-5, INV-1, INV-2, INV-4, INV-5, DIV-1, DIV-2, DIV-3, ED-2, ED-3, NS-3	99	Key 3	Center for Economic Growth, Albany Mayor's Office, Capitalize Albany Corporation	Albany Mayor's Office, Common Council, SUNY, College of Saint Rose, Union University, Sage Colleges, regional colleges and universities, Albany Medical Center, Albany Memorial Hospital, St. Peter's Hospital, Albany Veteran's Hospital, regional hospitals, Albany Port District Commission, Albany County Airport Authority, Global Foundries, CNSE, Tech Valley Chamber Coalition, regional municipalities, other members of the Capitalize Albany Committee	Partner contributions, volunteer members, staff resources
O-3	Develop the Harriman Campus as a mixed-use, transit-oriented community	Capital	LU-1, LU-2, PS-2, EMP-4, INV-2, MM-1, MM-2, PED-1, HDC-3, HDC-4, HDC-7	90	Key 2 Key 3	Harriman Research and Technology Development Corporation, Albany Mayor's Office	Dept. of Development and Planning, NYS Office of General Services, University at Albany, Private Developers, City School District, Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability	Private and state funding

Ongoing Programs		Project Type	Applicable System Strategies	System Interconnections	Targeted Keys	Lead Agency	Partnerships	Potential Funding Source(s)
O-4	Implement the initiatives outlined in the Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability	Planning / Capital	EN-1, EN-2, EN-3, EN-4, EMP-5, MM-2, AQ-1, WS-2, SW-1, SWM-1, SWM-2	67	Key 4	Albany Mayor's Office	CDRPC, Albany Dept. of General Services, NY Department of State, NY DEC, Albany County, CDTA	Climate Smart Communities Grants, NYSERDA Existing Facilities Program, NYSERDA New Construction Program, NYSERDA Alternative-Fuel Vehicle Program, NY DEC Waste Reduction, Recycling Household Hazardous Waste Program
O-5	Lead and support an education task force to develop a new urban education agenda	Partnership	ED-1, ED-2, ED-3, ED-4, ED-5, SS-3, SS-6, EMP-3, EMP-4, DIV-2, RP-1	52	Key 1	Albany School District, Albany Mayor's Office	Common Council, Albany Dept. of Development and Planning, charter schools, the State Board of Regents, SUNY, College of St. Rose, Union University, Sage Colleges, Albany Medical Center, Albany Memorial Hospital, Albany Veteran's Hospital, St. Peter's Hospital, major private sector employers, NYS Department of Education, Albany Housing Authority	Partner contributions, volunteer members, Promise Neighborhood Grant

Ongoing Programs		Project Type	Applicable System Strategies	System Interconnections	Targeted Keys	Lead Agency	Partnerships	Potential Funding Source(s)
O-6	Implement the Bicycle Master Plan	Capital	CHR-2, MM-1, BIC-1, BIC-2, BIC-3, VEH-3, AQ-1, EN-3	46	Key 4	Dept. of Development and Planning, Dept. of General Services, Division of Traffic Safety	Albany Bicycle Coalition, NYS DOT, CDTC, Albany County Dept. of Public Works, Adjacent Municipalities	NY DOT SAF-E TEA-LU; NY DOT TIGER II Discretionary Grant Program, NYS DOS – LWRP grant
O-7	Complete and implement the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Plan	Planning / Program	LU-3, LU-4, ARCH-2, ARCH-3, INV-2, NI-1	43	Key 1	Dept. of Development and Planning	Dept. of Fire and Emergency Services, Albany Police Dept., Division of Building and Codes, Corporation Counsel, Board of Zoning Appeals, Planning Board, Historic Resources Commission, Albany County, community development corporations, Affordable Housing Partnership, Empire State Future, Capital City Housing, Habitat for Humanity	Corporate sponsorships, local lending institutions, foundation grants, donation, staff resources, HUD
O-8	Implement a brownfield redevelopment strategy, starting with preparation of a Step Two Brownfields Opportunities Area (BOA) Nominations Study	Planning / Program	LU-4, ARCH-3, INV-2, WW-4, TS-2	39	Key 3 Key 4	Albany Dept. of Development and Planning	NYS DOS	NYS DOS – Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program, NYS DEC, NYS EPA

IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

Short Term Projects

ST-1. Create a Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

Many small, medium, and large cities have a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to manage capital spending. The CIP is a multiyear plan that forecasts spending for all anticipated capital projects. The CIP typically includes, but is not limited to the following capital projects:

- Repair and replacement of existing infrastructure (streets, bridges, utilities, etc.)
- Construction of new infrastructure.
- Renovation existing public buildings/facilities.
- Development of new public buildings/facilities.
- Acquisition of property for public use.
- Purchase of major equipment (HVAC, fleet/motor vehicles, computer networks, etc.)
- Other major public improvements.

Currently, the City of Albany does not have a formal CIP to effectively forecast and manage capital spending. The city should establish a CIP that is in alignment with the prioritization of capital projects established in the comprehensive plan and in subsequent plan updates.

Having a CIP will help the city more effectively manage its budgeting process, which is integral to increasing fiscal capacity by keeping track of capital spending and proactively identifying funding capacity for future projects.

Lead Agency: Albany Mayor's Office

Partnerships: All city departments

Potential Funding sources: Staff Resources

ST-2. Establish baseline Citywide Community Assessments.

To achieve the Albany 2030 vision, a deeper understanding of the issues, values and aspirations of the city's neighborhoods, as expressed by a neighborhood assessment, is warranted as a basis for the comprehensive plan strategies and projects, including zoning updates, pattern books, transit service improvements, public facilities and service upgrades, etc.

To ensure that the assessments are strategic, can be accomplished in a short time period, and are in alignment with the vision of the Comprehensive Plan, the assessments should be geographically and topically focused. The City of Albany Department of Development and Planning will create and map Neighborhood Assessment Areas of up to ten locations throughout the city to be used as the geographic basis for conducting the assessments. The following issues could be included in the assessments of each area:

- How many vacant, abandoned, and blighted properties exist within the neighborhood and where are they located?
- What is potential use of the vacant, abandoned, and blighted properties?
- What are potential development patterns on the blocks within the neighborhood?
- Where are potential development opportunities in the neighborhood and what could new development look like?
- What services are lacking in the neighborhood (retail, grocery, library, park space, etc.) and where should they be located?
- What is the mix of housing type throughout the neighborhood, is there a need for additional housing types (condominium, senior, multi-family)?
- What is the condition of the neighborhood school(s) in terms of physical structure, test scores, student/teacher ratio, reputation, etc.?
- Do children feel safe walking to and from school? If not, why not?
- How many incidents of crime occur in the neighborhood and are there particular areas where crime typically occurs? Is there a Neighborhood Watch program in place?
- How is transit connectivity in the neighborhood? Are there transit connections that could be improved?
- How walkable is the neighborhood? Are there gaps in the sidewalk network or sidewalks in disrepair?
- What is the relationship like between the neighborhood and local institutions, including universities, colleges, and hospitals?
- Are there issues with parking in the neighborhood? Where are the areas of concern?

The development of neighborhood assessments incorporates many strategies from across the comprehensive plan systems, including Community Form, Economy, Transportation, Social, Housing and Neighborhoods, and Institutions. The Housing and Neighborhoods system was also given the highest priority by the community in Community Forum 3. The plans could realistically be completed within one year and the cost could be kept to a minimum with city staff and volunteers. Volunteers and agency partners would be needed to supplement the City Planning Department for resources and assessment assistance.

Lead Agency: Albany Dept. of Development and Planning

Partnerships: City departments, CDRPC, SUNY, neighborhood associations

Potential Funding source: Staff Resources

[ST-3. Hire a marketing consultant to develop a city-wide marketing strategy.](#)

Albany has a vast number of assets and resources, including historic architecture, beautiful parks, the Hudson Waterfront, affordable housing, walkable neighborhoods, prestigious educational institutions, and an emerging technology sector, that could potentially draw additional visitors, new residents, and businesses. Individual local organizations do a good job marketing their respective neighborhoods or arenas, but Albany needs a citywide, comprehensive branding and marketing strategy to capitalize on these assets and attract new investment. There are many consultants that specialize in city branding and marketing that can provide a targeted strategy for building the city's image.

The Albany 2030 process itself has built a large pool of community stakeholders who have proven to be a receptive and engaged audience. The participation and positive engagement experienced throughout this endeavor has demonstrated the City's ability to disseminate a positive message through various media. A marketing strategy should build off of this momentum. The City should work with partners like the Albany – Colonie Chamber of Commerce, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Business Improvement Districts, the City's education institutions and hospitals, and the Albany Visitor Center to ensure that the strategy is carried out by all major stakeholders.

This Citywide strategy must incorporate social media and web 2.0 applications. These new technologies offer exciting opportunities for enhanced communications and marketing. Today's consumer demands a social media component to any marketing campaign, which allows for instantaneous news as well as feedback. The City and its partners should capitalize on these cost-effective and efficient methods.

The marketing strategy should emphasize the following messages:

- Livability
- Business Friendliness
- International Appeal
- Technological Hub
- Sustainability Trailblazer
- Key Educational Center
- Innovative Healthcare Community
- Recreation, Culture and Tourism Destination

It should be emphasized that this marketing strategy should focus internally as well as externally. Albany residents and stakeholders often demonstrate a negative sense of place epitomized by the “Smallbany” mentality. Efforts should be made to promote the City’s assets within the community as well. This will not only affect local perceptions, but increase positive word-of-mouth.

Marketing the city’s assets and resources is a strategy that appears in the Economy (INV-1, INV-2) and Housing and Neighborhoods (HDC-5) systems, which were given the highest priority in the community forum budget exercise. Staff capacity should not be significant. The cost to hire a consultant could be moderately expensive, but not prohibitive.

Lead Agencies: Albany Dept. of Development and Planning, Capitalize Albany Corporation

Partnerships: Downtown BID, Lark Street BID, Central BID, Empire State Development Corp., Albany-Colonie Chamber of Commerce, local institutions

Potential Funding source: Partner cost-share

ST-4. [Develop system for inter-departmental and community data sharing to improve government efficiency](#)

Consistent and coordinated access to data and information among city departments, other key non-city agencies and institutions (school district, housing authority, parking authority, state department, etc.), as well as the public, is critical to optimizing governmental efficiency. Currently, the city does not have a coordinated system for sharing data. A new inter-departmental and community information sharing system should be developed that includes the following features:

- E-commerce (the process of buying and selling of goods and services on the Internet)

- GIS (interface of geographic mapping for parcels, roads, environmental features, etc. with descriptive database information)
- Public notification
- Crowd-sourcing and other interactive social media applications for two-way communication.
- Information sharing and tracking (crime statistics, building permits issued/denied, zoning requests/approvals, business licenses issued, sales tax receipts, etc.)
- Utilization of PEG (Public, Education, and Government) Access Board and Channel to disseminate pertinent public information.
- Promotion and dissemination of program and special interest information (i.e. bi-cycling awareness, planning activities, special events, emergency preparedness).

Improving governmental and community efficiency is a key strategy for improving institutional and community relations and contributes to improving fiscal capacity by streamlining governmental operations. Leadership capacity, staff capacity, and fiscal requirements would be moderate.

Lead Agency: Albany Office of the Treasurer

Partnerships: City departments, key institutions (Albany School District, colleges and universities, major industries, Chamber of Commerce, Albany County, state departments, etc.)

Potential Funding sources: NYS Archives LGRMIF grant

ST-5. [Develop a Comprehensive Urban Agricultural Plan.](#)

Access to healthy food has been identified as a significant issue impacting the health and welfare of Albany's residents. Urban agriculture, the practice of cultivating, processing and distributing food in, or around the city, is an innovative approach to increasing access to fresh, healthy, affordable food while stimulating the local economy. However, food cultivation and livestock practices don't always integrate well with the compact nature of urban neighborhoods, and a comprehensive urban agriculture strategy will need to be developed for supporting efforts to grow and consume more fresh, sustainably produced, and locally grown foods within the city. A comprehensive urban agriculture plan should include the following elements:

- Identify the various forms of urban farming (community gardens, rooftop gardens, residential gardens, etc.)
- Identify appropriate locations for urban farms according to the intensity of use and community engagement.

- Identify opportunities to make more land available for urban agriculture (vacant land reuse, acquisition, leasing, etc).
- Create economic opportunity for local growers of food as well as local residents.
- Promote innovative design for food cultivation.
- Identify and reduce regulatory barriers to the creation of fresh/farmers markets, food cooperatives and appropriate urban agriculture and develop performance standards for better regulation where necessary.
- Address the role that livestock may play in the urban food system.

A comprehensive plan for urban agriculture addresses key strategies for community health, neighborhood services, and economic investment. This program would require moderate leadership and staff capacity that can be supplemented with partnerships with the Food Trust, the Cornell Cooperative Extension, Capital District Community Gardens, etc.

Lead Agency: Albany Dept. of Development and Planning

Partnerships: Albany County Office of Natural Resource Conservation, the Food Trust, local farmers markets, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County, Capital District Community Gardens, Albany County Dept. of Health

Potential Funding sources: USDA Community Food Projects (CFP) Grant Program, partner contribution, private foundation, Albany County Dept. of Health, Albany Convention Center and Visitors Bureau, City Historian, Partners for Albany Stories

ST-6. Create a PILOT task force and implement a fair and consistent PILOT program.

A City-led task force should be created that includes the City of Albany Common Council, the NYS Office of General Services, Albany County, representatives from University at Albany, College of Saint Rose, Union University (Albany Law School, Albany College of Pharmacy, Albany Medical College), Sage Colleges, Albany Medical Center, Albany Memorial Hospital, Albany Veteran's Hospital, St. Peter's Hospital, the City of Albany School District, the Albany Housing Authority, religious institutions and other tax-exempt properties that own one acre or more of land in the city to design a comprehensive, consistent, and fair approach for implementing PILOT to help cover the cost of providing the institutions with essential city services (i.e. police, fire, snow removal). This approach can be very similar to Boston's program for calculating the PILOT.

- Keep the program voluntary. Maintain a spirit of partnership among institutions.
- Apply the PILOT program to all nonprofit groups. All nonprofits should participate in the program, although an exception should be made for smaller nonprofits that might lack the resources to fully engage in the PILOT process. In Boston, the task-

force members suggested a total property value threshold of \$15 million for program participation. Since Albany's property values are much lower than Boston's, a more appropriate threshold should be applied, which should be negotiated among the task force partners.

- Base PILOT contributions on the value of real estate owned by an institution. Payments should reflect the size and quality of the institution's real estate holdings and be consistent with the approach taken for taxable properties. In Boston, the PILOT is recommended to be calculated as 25% of what the institution's property would yield if taxable, but this percentage should be negotiated among Albany task force partners.
- Give credit for community benefits offered by the institution. Examples of community benefits may include targeted scholarships for Albany High School students, jobs for residents and students, free healthcare screenings for Albany residents, neighborhood tree planting, etc. In Boston, recommended credits for community benefits are limited to 50% of full PILOT payment. This should be negotiated among Albany task force partners.
- Allow for an adjustment period for institutions and the city to fully implement the new PILOT calculation formula. Apply a gradual approach that will allow for a smooth transition to the new program. The Boston program recommends that the new formula should be phased in over a period of five years. The timeframe should be negotiated among Albany task force partners.

Tax-exempt properties constitute over 50% of the total acreage of properties in Albany and create significant budget issues for the city. A consistently applied PILOT program would help increase the city's capacity to provide more services and implement projects. Also, the recommended credit for community benefits can leverage additional strategies identified across systems, particularly for education, job training, and neighborhood investment. The cost of forming the task force would not be significant, but a high level of staff and leadership capacity would be required. The formation of the task force is a high priority project that should be initiated within one year, with the understanding that actual application of the PILOT program could take up to five years.

Lead Agencies: Albany Mayor's Office, Common Council

Partnerships: NYS Office of General Services, Albany County, Albany School District, SUNY, College of St. Rose, Albany Law School, Albany Medical College, Albany College of Pharmacy, Sage Colleges, Albany Medical Center, Albany Memorial Hospital, Albany Veteran's Hospital, St. Peter's Hospital, Albany Housing Authority

Potential Funding sources: Volunteer members, partner staff resources

ST-7. Create an Access to Healthy Foods program.

Access to full service grocery stores and fresh local produce is key to improving community health and neighborhood investment. Several neighborhoods in Albany do not have grocery stores and markets in close proximity and may too often rely on convenience facilities with limited options for fresh food.

- Partner with organizations such as The Food Trust and Low Income Investment Fund to bring full service grocery stores to underserved neighborhoods.
- Identify and market suitable sites for grocery stores within walking distance of neighborhoods and require pedestrian and bicycle amenities during site design.
- Promote and incentivize community gardens, rooftop gardens, and farmers markets.
- Develop a partnership between farmers, farmers markets, and the Albany School District to incorporate fresh, healthy food in city schools and improve nutritional education.

Access to healthy food addresses key strategies for neighborhood services, economic investment, and community health. This program would require significant leadership and staff capacity but financial commitments would not be substantial.

Lead Agencies: Albany Dept. of Development and Planning

Partnerships: Albany County Health Dept., The Food Trust, Low Income Investment Fund, local farmers markets, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Albany County, Capital District Community Gardens, local community garden associations, the Radix Center

Potential Funding sources: Partner cost-share, partner technical assistance, USDA Community Food Project, NYS Healthy Foods, Healthy Communities Fund, American Farmland Trust

ST-8. Expand the current street-tree management plan into a comprehensive urban forestry program.

A comprehensive urban forestry program should be developed through the City's Department of General Services with support from the Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability to increase and maintain the health of Albany's urban tree canopy, including the following steps:

- Measure the existing tree canopy, quantify its current CO₂ sink capacity as a means of climate change mitigation, and set a canopy coverage goal for the next ten years.
- Develop an Urban Forest Management Plan that includes best practices for increasing and maintaining the City's urban tree canopy, including replacing aging and

diseased trees, and protecting existing trees from pests. Consider i-Tree or other tools to build capacity for urban forest assessment and management.

- Set targets for planting trees in parks, along streets, and in sensitive environmental areas (e.g., riparian corridors and areas with steep slopes) based on the existing inventory.
- Partner with community garden groups and others interested in neighborhood greening to increase participation in Albany's Street Tree Planting Program.
- Develop a tree maintenance program that utilizes volunteer services in partnership with universities, Capital District Community Gardens (CDCG), and/or other neighborhood groups. The program could be modeled after Ithaca's volunteer Citizen Pruner program, which provides free training to volunteers in exchange for a commitment to assist the City Forester with maintaining trees and other special projects throughout the City.
- Partner with institutions (e.g., universities, hospitals, state government) and public schools to increase the tree canopy on large, urban campuses and reduce storm-water runoff.
- Disseminate information on the benefits of the urban forest and best practices for planting and maintenance. For example, shading from trees reduces the urban heat island impact, cooling demands, and heat related illnesses.
- Adopt a tree preservation/landscape ordinance that limits disturbance to existing trees and plants, requires replacement of trees above a specified size that are removed and includes provisions requiring native trees and plants to be retained or replaced in sensitive environmental areas (e.g. Pine Bush Preserve.) This ordinance should be included in the site plan review process.

The urban forestry program is an important leverage point for establishing Albany as a green community and priority strategies for protecting natural resources and improving air quality. Significant leadership and staff capacity will be required and the cost would be moderate.

Lead Agency: Albany Dept. of General Services

Partnerships: Albany Dept. of Development and Planning, local institutions

Potential Funding sources: NY DEC Urban and Community Forestry Grant, partner contribution, volunteers

Intermediate Term Projects

IT-1. Prepare a comprehensive update to the city's zoning ordinance.

New zoning techniques and incentives appeared as strategies or actions within strategies across multiple systems, including Community Form, Economy, Transportation, Natural Resources, Housing and Neighborhoods, and Utilities and Infrastructure. Preparing a comprehensive update to the city's zoning ordinance that incorporates all of the recommended strategies and actions is a logical implementation project.

- Hire an outside consulting team to provide capacity and build from existing staff expertise.
- Revise the zoning ordinance and map to be consistent with the Albany 2030 land use framework map.
- Promote mixed use development in neighborhood commercial centers, the downtown, and along transit corridors.
- Create Transit Oriented Development overlay districts along existing and proposed transit corridors.
- Apply additional design standards in areas not included in the TND overlay or within a historic district, such as the Harriman Campus development opportunity site and the waterfront districts.
- Update the sign code to address neighborhood context.
- Create development incentives to attract investment in particular areas and to encourage use of design guidelines, development of affordable housing, green building design, and historic preservation. Examples may include:
 - Density, height, and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) bonuses, depending on the district and neighborhood agreement on density limits
 - Parking reductions based on availability of on-street parking and transit
 - Mix of uses based on neighborhood input
 - Permit and fee waivers, depending on the intensity of development
 - Fast track permitting depending on the intensity, type and location of development
- Create tree protection and tree replacement standards and require native trees and plants to be retained in sensitive environmental areas.
- Create a steep slope ordinance to limit development and construction on slopes over a certain percentage (e.g., greater than 15%).
- Include clear guidelines for applicants and the Planning Board to protect natural habitats.

- Clarify and streamline the review process.

A comprehensive zoning ordinance amendment addresses strategies and actions that overlap significantly across systems. Zoning strategies and actions also appear in several strategies identified as leverage points. A comprehensive zoning update would take at least two years to complete and would require a significant amount of staff time and likely significant financial expenditure if a consultant is used. In the event that additional resources and capacity are secured prior to the intermediate term, this project may be initiated within the short term. This project should be initiated after the Citywide Community Assessments have been completed.

Lead Agency: Albany Dept. of Development and Planning

Partnerships: Common Council, Board of Zoning Appeals, Planning Board, Historic Resources Commission, Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability, neighborhood associations, community stakeholders, Division of Building and Codes, Corporation Counsel

Potential Funding source: HUD grant, Hudson River Valley Greenway

IT-2. Create and implement a comprehensive waterfront development strategy for the Hudson River waterfront.

Several plans have been created for Albany's Hudson River waterfront, including the Port of Albany Master Plan, the Living History Plan, the North Waterfront Redevelopment Strategy, the Mohawk Hudson Hike Bike Trail Plan, the Hudson River Crossing Plan, and the Patroon Greenway Project. A new comprehensive strategy for waterfront access and development needs to be created to tie all of these plans together into cohesive short and long term implementation program.

A Waterfront Development Task Force should be created to develop a comprehensive waterfront development strategy. This team should include representatives from Federal and State regulatory and funding agencies, local waterfront attractions and business, the Port of Albany and other stakeholders. The comprehensive waterfront development strategy needs to include an implementation program that is longer term to account for large projects such as addressing the I-787 and active rail line barriers and a phased development approach in the north waterfront area. The comprehensive strategy should include:

- Short term strategies for improving access to the waterfront - including bus connections to the Corning Preserve and a signage and way-finding plan to guide visitors to the waterfront from the highway, surface roads, and trails/bike paths.
- Long term strategies for improving access to the waterfront – address the barriers of I-787 and the active rail line; incorporate the findings of NYS DOT's and CDTC's current initiative to create alternative designs for the I-787 Integrated Corridor Study.

- Coordination with the State and Albany Port District Commission on ways to overcome the policy on commercial development at Corning Preserve to allow limited commercial development at the waterfront.
- Expanding greenway connections to and along the waterfront, including implementation of the Patroon Greenway and extending the Mohawk-Hudson River Trail south from the Corning Preserve along the Hudson River to the proposed Albany County Rail Trail.
- A phased development and redevelopment approach for the north waterfront, evaluating and incorporating recommendations from the North Waterfront Redevelopment strategy.
- Increasing dock space on the Albany side of the Hudson River waterfront and the feasibility of a marina.
- Identifying and addressing barriers to boat passage for boats of all sizes, including bridge clearance and channel width and depth.
- Improving the appearance and function of the Albany Rowing Center, including sidewalk repairs, improvements to the parking area, and physical improvements to the boathouse.
- Improving the appearance of parking areas near the waterfront.
- Marketing waterfront events and assets, including Alive at Five, Head of the Hudson Regatta, the Riverfront Bar and Grille, and identifying opportunities for new events.

A comprehensive waterfront development strategy should build on the LWRP to include longer term strategies that will optimize use and enjoyment of the waterfront. Improving access to the Hudson River waterfront and capitalizing on the waterfront assets were included as strategies and actions across multiple systems, including Community Form, Economy, Social, Transportation, and Natural Resources. Capitalizing on the waterfront was also raised as a high priority issues in each of the community forums and was included as an action in several strategies identified as leverage points, particularly in Economy INV-1 and 2 and Community Form [UD-2](#) for mobilizing private investment.

The comprehensive waterfront development strategy can be considered an intermediate project since the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and I-787 Integrated Corridor Study will take time to complete and will need to be incorporated into the plan. Since so much work on the waterfront has been completed, albeit in a fragmented way, creation of the waterfront strategy need not be a long or expensive process. Significant staff and leadership capacity will be required.

Lead Agencies: Albany Dept. of Development and Planning, Albany Port District

Commission

Partnerships: Dept. of General Services, NYS Office of General Services, Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability, Albany County, Albany Rowing Center, Hudson River Valley Greenway, NYS DOT, USS Slater, Downtown BID, neighborhood associations, Albany County Convention and Visitors Bureau, City of Rensselaer

Potential Funding source: NYS DOS – LWRP, Hudson River Valley Greenway

IT-3. Create a Strategic Arts Welcoming Program.

The artist community provides a valuable asset to Albany by enhancing the cultural environment and attracting visitors and investment. A strategic program for artist support would incorporate the live-work initiative and add additional programs to attract, support, and retain artists in Albany by creating a welcoming atmosphere for artists.

- Encouraging construction of affordable live-work space through the reuse of vacant land and the City's proposed Land Banking Program.
- Using zoning and development regulations to encourage mixed-income and affordable housing units.
- Highlighting local artists in exhibition/wall space within the City's public buildings.
- Inviting artists to participate in competitions for public art and other design installations (e.g., lighting, bicycle or transit design elements).
- Partnering with new and emerging arts and cultural organizations to increase opportunities for artists.
- Exploring the creation of a Public Art Review Process to streamline the installation of new public art projects.
- Developing an artist live-work strategy to attract and retain artists in Albany.

Providing a welcoming atmosphere to attract and retain artists addresses key strategies for arts and culture, neighborhood identity, cultural education, and economic investment.

Lead Agency: Local non-profit

Partnerships: Local arts and cultural organizations, Albany BARN, SUNY Art Dept., College of St. Rose Center for Art and Design, Sage Colleges Visual Art Program, Downtown BID, Lark Street BID, Central BID, NYS Council on the Arts (NYSCA), Dept. of Development and Planning

Potential Funding sources: Partner contribution, NYSCA Planning Grant, private foundation, National Endowment for the Arts

IT-4. Grow and strengthen the local Small Business Development Community.

A partnership with small business support organizations like Albany Center for Economic Success, the Chamber of Commerce, the Entrepreneurial Association Center (EAC) and the New York Small Business Development Center should be developed to highlight and enhance the technical and financial assistance to new and start-up businesses who locate in Albany. Capitalize Albany Corporation could play a role in working with this niche community of small and micro business support organizations to better promote how to access the services provided by each of these organizations. As a part of this initiative, a welcome program could be standardized to familiarize new businesses with neighborhood and local issues, as well as funding and service opportunities.

This community could also be augmented to act as an advocacy tool for small business interests at the local, County and State level. This would open a formal line of communication with the City, County and State on upcoming legislation that would affect local businesses. Issues could include:

- Local government and code liaison
- Start-up barriers
- Taxes and fees

This program should include the development of goals and targets for local business development and coordination with the small business development community to meet these goals.

Building investment in the city and creating jobs by nurturing local entrepreneurship is a strong leverage point for building fiscal capacity and mobilizing private investment in Albany. Strong leadership capacity will be required as well as staff capacity to provide technical assistance, and time will be needed to allocate funds for financial assistance.

Lead Agency: Capitalize Albany Corporation

Partnerships: Albany Center for Economic Success, Albany-Colonie Chamber of Commerce, New York Small Business Development Center, Center for Economic Growth, Capital District Community Loan Fund

Potential Funding sources: NYS Entrepreneurial Assistance Program, partner technical assistance.

IT-5 Develop a commercial / office space reuse plan and program

Recent commercial and office vacancy trends indicate that, while Downtown Class A space in Albany is outperforming suburban markets, Class B and C space have high

vacancy rates. A new program is needed to support and encourage the adaptation of Class B and C commercial/office space to more productive use, including mixed use, residential, hotel, live-work etc. The commercial / office space reuse plan and program should include the following steps:

- Identify underperforming Class B and C commercial and office spaces.
- Study individual spaces and identify feasible opportunities for reuse based on size, configuration, and market potential.
- Identify target markets for different reuse opportunities and develop an advertising and marketing program for the properties.
- Develop incentives and strategies for encouraging reuse and renovation of spaces for target markets, including:
 - Financial support for relocation and renovation
 - Tax incentives for reuse and renovation of identified properties
 - Flexibility in code requirements for adaptively reusing historic properties and other buildings that may not be able to accommodate strict adherence to the code (without sacrificing safety).
 - Flexibility in zoning and code requirements for accommodating creative use of space, such as live-work space.

Creating a plan for the reuse of underperforming commercial and office space addresses several system strategies for Economy, Community Form, and Housing and Neighborhoods. Reuse of underutilized space also encourages new investment, a significant leverage point for increasing fiscal capacity and mobilizing private investment. Significant staff capacity would be needed and time would be needed to establish financial incentives.

Lead Agency: Capitalize Albany Corporation

Partnerships: Downtown BID, Lark Street BID, Central BID, Dept. of Development and Planning, local realtors, private developers, property owners

Potential Funding source: Staff resources, partner cost-share

IT-6. [Develop a complete streets plan, policy, and design guidelines.](#)

A citywide complete streets policy should be developed in compliance with NYS 2011 legislation that ensures that in new street construction and reconstruction, travel by pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit, and motorized vehicles and their passengers are safely accommodated.

- A traffic calming plan in appropriate areas of the City to increase safety while maintaining efficient traffic flow.
- Incorporation of bike infrastructure in accordance with the Bicycle Master Plan.
- Multi-modal design guidelines to support alternative modes of transportation:
 - Mixed-use, compact development.
 - Build-to lines.
 - Parking required to be located behind or to the side of buildings
 - Transportation amenities and parking (e.g. bike racks, bike lockers, bus shelters, crosswalks).
 - Incorporation of new transportation modes into redesigned streets, such as electric cars, mopeds and other types of personal mobility devices.
 - Incorporation of “green streets”, including porous pavement treatments, street trees, rain gardens, bioswales, etc.

Strategies for multi-modal transportation have a high degree of interconnection across systems and are significant leverage points for establishing Albany as a green community. Significant leadership capacity and staff capacity would be required and costs would be moderate. The city’s complete streets policy should be coordinated with the state’s policy.

Lead Agencies: Department of Development and Planning, Department of General Services, Division of Traffic Safety

Partnerships: NYS DOT, CDTC, CDTA, BIDs

Potential Funding sources: NY DOT SAFETEA-LU; NY DOT TIGER II Discretionary Grant Program

IT-7. Develop a green infrastructure system.

A green infrastructure plan should be developed that sets targets for reductions in impervious surfaces and stormwater sewer inputs to reduce stormwater runoff and mitigates CSOS, and comply with New York State water quality standards and Clean Water Act requirements. As part of the plan:

- Establish a “toolbox” of green infrastructures techniques (green streets, permeable pavers, green roofs, bioswales, riparian buffers, tree plantings, etc.) and new code language that can be implemented and adopted respectfully, to achieve targets, and other techniques identified in the New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual.

- Initiate and track the progress of stormwater management demonstration projects (e.g., "green streets" with new street trees, tree trenches, permeable pavers, and modified stormwater inlets) in target locations such as parking lots, residential streets, and parks and measure performance in absorbing runoff.
- Develop a technical manual that includes Low Impact Development Design Guidelines to meet targets for reduced impervious surfaces and stormwater sewer inputs based on a green infrastructure plan and Long-Term Control Plan.
- Pilot a "green neighborhood" through the development of a comprehensive green infrastructure system as part of new and redevelopment activities.

Controlling the impacts of stormwater runoff and Combined Sewer Overflows through green infrastructure was considered a high priority in Community Forum 3 and has multiple system interconnections between the Natural Resources, Utilities and Infrastructure, and Transportation systems. Significant leadership and staff capacity would be required and the cost for planning, demonstration projects and the technical manual would be moderately high.

Lead Agencies: Albany Dept. of Water and Water Supply, Albany Dept. of General Services - Division of Engineering

Partnerships: Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability, Albany County Dept. for Economic Development, Conservation and Planning, CDRPC, Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District, Division of Building and Codes, NYS DEC, NYS DOT

Potential Funding sources: NYS DEC Water Quality Management Planning Projects, NYS DEC Water Quality Improvement Project Program; US EPA Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Grant, NYS Environmental Facilities Corp

IT-8. Create an "Albany Local" buy local/use local program.

A partnership with Capital Region Local First should be established to develop a strong buy local program designed specifically for businesses located in Albany to spur economic activity and hedge against economic downturns. This program could include several components:

- Partnering with the City's new marketing strategy and existing local business service agencies to highlight local businesses and the importance of supporting local commercial activity.
- Partnering with local business service agencies to provide business development assistance for local business start-ups and support for existing local businesses, particularly for minority and women-owned businesses.
- Encouraging Albany businesses and residents to use services and purchase products provided by local companies. This could include a local challenge asking busi-

nesses and residents to set and meet goals for buying and using local services and products.

- Expanding access to and use of locally-grown produce, including identifying and accessing State and Federal funding for locally-grown produce initiatives.
- Sponsoring a Buy Local Bash in Albany. Capital Region Local First sponsors Buy Local Bashes, trade shows allowing local businesses to display their products and services and to celebrate the strength of the local economy.
- Exploring a local currency program to encourage Albany households to shop locally. A model program is Ithaca, New York's Ithaca Hours, in which the local currency – Ithaca Hours - is bought with U.S. dollars and can be traded with local shops for products or services.

Local business growth and support is interconnected with several system strategies for investment, job growth and neighborhood services. It is also part of leverage points for increasing fiscal capacity and mobilizing private investment. Leadership and staff capacity would be moderate if partnering with Local First.

Lead Agencies: Albany Dept. of Development and Planning, Capitalize Albany Corporation

Partnerships: Capital Region Local First, Albany Office of Special Events, BIDS, local employers, neighborhood associations, Albany Office of the Treasurer, local institutions

Potential Funding sources: Partner technical assistance and cost-share, USDA

[IT-9. Develop a city-wide parking management strategy.](#)

The City should work with the Albany Parking Authority, the City's Division of Traffic Safety and Capital District Transportation Authority and other stakeholders to develop a city-wide parking management strategy that addresses all aspects of parking, including parking supply, demand and usage, design, impacts on neighborhoods, and management of on-street parking. The parking management strategy should include the following:

- A parking study of all city neighborhoods, including a full assessment of existing parking supply, usage, current and future demand, and impacts on neighborhoods.
- Working cooperatively with the State of New York, the Albany Parking Authority and others to find opportunities for changes to State-employee parking policies that would better synchronize with City of Albany resident and visitor needs. Such changes could include fee structures, shared parking during off hours and incentives for transit use.
- A review of off-street parking standards and required ratios, considering the use of maximum parking requirements where other modes provide accessibility options, incentives for shared and/or off-site parking, and fees "in lieu of" on-site parking.
- Study the potential benefits and impacts of new permit parking regulations in Albany

neighborhoods.

- Development of parking policies and standards that support and encourage the land use and community form desired by the City. This includes development of parking behind buildings, rather than between buildings and the street, encouraging good street design, facilitating pedestrian access and improving traffic circulation.
- Developing a compendium of parking policies (City, State, etc.) and potential for coordinated parking pricing strategies.
- Consider privatization of public facilities in order to fund further economic development strategies.

Parking management is tied to system strategies and leverage points for mobilizing private investment and improving neighborhood services. This project would require a coordinated effort between the city, parking authority, and a parking management consultant. Moderate leadership and staff capacity and financial capacity would be required.

Lead Agencies: Albany Parking Authority, Division of Traffic Safety

Partnerships: Downtown BID, Lark Street BID, Central BID, NY Office of General Services, SUNY, College of St. Rose, neighborhood associations, Dept. of Development and Planning, Capitalize Albany Corporation

Potential Funding source: Staff Resources, Partner cost-share

Long Term Projects

LT-1. Develop intermodal transit centers.

Work cooperatively with CDTA, CDTC, and private bus operators to develop new Intermodal Transit Centers.

- The first of these centers should be in downtown Albany adjacent to the site of the proposed Convention Center with connections to the Rensselaer Amtrak Station and Albany International Airport. Design the Intermodal Transit Center using high quality urban design and planning principles that encourage mass transit use. This includes strong connections for walking between the Center and the downtown, appropriate transit-oriented land uses, adding bike connections and storage, and facilitating bus traffic so as to minimize the impact on nearby streets.
- The second Intermodal Transit Center is proposed for the intersection of the Northway, the New York State Thruway and Washington Avenue Extension, adjacent to Crossgates Mall. This location will provide better connections for residents, as well as the opportunity for commuters to access alternative modes of transportation into Albany's

commercial centers, thereby reducing traffic congestion and local demand for parking.

Maximize the Intermodal Transit Center's benefit to downtown Albany by increasing transit services through schedule changes, improved connections, and ensuring the safety and security of transit riders.

The development of the multi-modal transit center is tied to multi-modal strategies that are interconnected across multiple systems and actions. The project would require extensive leadership capacity for coordination, but would primarily be implemented by the CDTC and state rather than the city. Planning and design work would take several years and significant funding would be required.

Lead Agencies: CDTA, Albany Convention Center Authority, Dept. of Development and Planning

Partnerships: CDTC, Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability, NY Office of General Services, Amtrak, Adirondack Trailways, Greyhound, Albany County Airport Authority

Potential Funding sources: NY DOT SAFETEA-LU, NY DOT TIGER II Discretionary Grant Program, NY DOT TIP

[LT-2. Work with the State of New York to research and pilot a model urban rehabilitation building code.](#)

Conventional building codes are typically designed for new construction, which can create expensive retrofits for existing buildings, particularly historic buildings. In an effort to reduce barriers to building renovation, adaptive reuse, and historic preservation, research model building codes that express necessary changes for reducing barriers to redevelopment, including flexibility in restoration or rehabilitation of existing structures to encourage reuse rather than demolition of existing structures.

- Structural and safety regulations that work with an existing building's height, area, and fire resistance ratings.
- Timeliness of processing and enforcement (i.e., most projects should be handled routinely rather than as special cases).
- Predictability, i.e., people should know the law applicable to them and be free from arbitrary treatment.
- Reasonableness, i.e., provide a reasonable level of safety without imposing excessive additional costs.

The model rehabilitation building code can be used as a basis for developing pilot rehabilitation projects under the recommended standards and working with the New York

Department of State to adopt a statewide rehabilitation building code.

Model rehabilitation codes include the New Jersey Rehabilitation Subcode (<http://www.state.nj.us/dca/divisions/codes/offices/rehab.html>) and the Maryland Building Rehabilitation Code (<http://mdcodes.umbc.edu/dhcd2/rehab-new.htm>). The rehabilitation building code addresses several system strategies under Community Form and Housing and Neighborhoods for encouraging adaptive reuse and eliminating blighting influences. Significant leadership and staff capacity would be required, including extensive coordination with state agencies, building associations, the Housing Authority, and other development agencies.

Lead Agency: Albany Division of Building and Codes

Partnerships: Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability, NY Dept. of State

Potential Funding source: Staff Resources

LT-3. Develop context appropriate design guidelines, manuals and pattern books.

The city-wide design guidelines manual should provide examples and direction for preferred design elements that affect the entire city landscape, including:

- Signage standards
- Landscape standards
- Lighting standards
- Parking standards

The pattern books should consider resident preferences for design quality. Building on existing neighborhood plans and new neighborhood assessments, conduct visual preference sessions with neighborhood associations and residents to confirm design preferences. Design guidelines should be paired with development incentives, including:

- Density, height, and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) bonuses, depending on the district and neighborhood agreement on density limits.
- Parking reductions based on availability of on-street parking and transit.
- Mix of uses based on neighborhood input.
- Permit and fee waivers, depending on the intensity of development
- Fast track permitting depending on the intensity, type and location of development

This project is tied to strategies that address Community Form and Housing and Neighborhood systems primarily and contribute to improving Albany's image by maintaining and improving neighborhood identity. Significant staff capacity and a design and public outreach consultant will be required. This project should be initiated after completion

of the strategic neighborhood plans and in coordination with a comprehensive zoning update.

Lead Agency: Albany Dept. of Development and Planning

Partnerships: Neighborhood stakeholders, Albany Division of Building and Codes, Educational Institutions

Potential Funding sources: HUD, NYS Council of the Arts, partner in-kind services

Ongoing Programs

O-1. Establish formal lobbying presence at the State and Federal level.

The City of Albany currently leans on existing staff and the Mayor's office for all lobbying efforts. In order to provide more effective and consistent influence at the state and federal levels, an on-site presence and ongoing activities should be established. Particularly in the current economic climate with dwindling resources, the City of Albany must be proactive in highlighting local needs and issues. This should include establishing partnerships with local organizations to create a lobbying agenda.

Key issues that should be emphasized include:

- Current grant applications and future grant opportunities
- Promoting and improving urban education
- Economic development
- Energy and sustainability funding
- Housing, neighborhood and community development funding and support
- Natural resource protection funding and support
- A consistent approach for implementing Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs)
- Transportation and infrastructure project funding and support

A dedicated on-site presence will allow for better communication of local concerns and needs to our representatives, which will translate into additional resources and more efficient governmental response. This will also enable the City to stay current on emerging trends, funding sources and technical issues, while networking and leveraging the influence of other lobbyists and organizations that support the City's agenda.

Establishing a dedicated on-site lobbying presence in the City to provide funding and political support for implementation projects and ongoing policy development addresses

strategies across all comprehensive plan systems. Significant funding would be required to retain a firm, but would substantially reduce demands on staff capacity.

Lead Agency: Albany Mayor's Office

Partnerships: NYS DOS, NYS Senate and House of Representatives, US Senate and House of Representatives (New York), Albany County

Potential Funding source: City and stakeholder resources

O-2. Develop a formal Regional Economic Development Program

Current National trends are changing the way State economic development policies are formed and funding is distributed. In 2011, New York State instituted an Economic Development Council system, dividing the state into ten councils that compete for State resources. The Capital Region is identified as one of these Councils. The City of Albany should position itself as the regional driver for coordination and participation among the Capital Region's local jurisdictions by developing a regional Economic Development Program, including a Task Force and local engagement on regional economic development initiatives.

The Regional Economic Development Task Force should expand from the Capitalize Albany committee to ensure the inclusion of the following partners:

- County Executives
- Regional municipalities, towns and villages
- The Chamber of Commerce
- The Center for Economic Growth
- Center for Nanoscale Science and Engineering
- Global Foundries
- Economic development organizations
- Albany International Airport
- Albany Port District Commission
- Major regional industry leaders

The Capitalize Albany plan sets out the economic development agenda for Albany, but this effort could be expanded to include a new regional focus to address the economic health of the Capital District, which has direct implications for Albany's growth. The Capitalize Albany committee should reconvene to address regional economic development issues, particularly competition among municipalities for investment, developments of

regional impacts, and a regional strategy for attracting and supporting businesses and start-ups, job training, education, and employment.

The Capitalize Albany Corporation should also continue its efforts to develop locally transformational projects with a regional economic development impact. The Corporation's 2011 partnership with the City of Albany to produce a local advisory report to the Capital District Regional Economic Development Council by engaging the local community on project priorities and regional economic development issues should be replicated and sustained.

Lead Agencies: Capitalize Albany Corporation, Center for Economic Growth, City of Albany Mayor's Office

Partnerships: Albany Mayor's Office, Common Council, SUNY, College of Saint Rose, Union University, Sage Colleges, regional colleges and universities, Albany Medical Center, Albany Memorial Hospital, St. Peter's Hospital, Albany Veteran's Hospital, regional hospitals, Albany Port District Commission, Albany County Airport Authority, Global Foundries, CNSE, Tech Valley Chamber Coalition, regional municipalities, other members of the Capitalize Albany Committee

Potential Funding sources: Partner contributions, volunteer members, staff resources

O-3. Develop the Harriman Campus as a mixed-use, transit-oriented community.

Redevelopment of the 300-acre Harriman Campus is the city's primary large-scale real estate development opportunity. The redevelopment of Harriman Campus as private taxable property would offer an unparalleled opportunity for much-needed new jobs and new tax revenue in the City of Albany. A master plan has been completed, but leadership changes in New York State government as well as the recent dramatic changes to local, State and National economic conditions have put the redevelopment plans on hold. The city and project partners (Harriman Research and Technology Development Corporation (HRTDC), NYS, University at Albany) must ensure that the development plans maximize opportunities for sustainable economic growth and incorporate key strategies of the comprehensive plan. It is important that the Harriman Campus is considered in conjunction with the entire Upper Washington corridor as an opportunity to re-knit the uptown campuses with the surrounding neighborhoods and the City's Midtown.

Strategies for the redevelopment of Harriman Campus must include the following:

- Clear and appropriate connection to surrounding neighborhoods and street grid.
- The appropriate mix of office, retail, hospitality/entertainment, institutional, and residential uses based on market conditions.
- Walkable, high density compact development.

- Clear pedestrian connections to transit stops.
- Complete streets in all new and reconstructed streets, including sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit.
- Green infrastructure design.
- A tree protection and landscaping plan.
- Incentives for energy efficient buildings.
- A mix of housing types, including apartment, condominiums, townhouses, senior housing and continuing care facilities.
- Design guidelines and architectural standards for high quality development.

The Harriman Campus redevelopment has the opportunity to attract investment in Albany while also addressing key strategies across systems for job creation, multi-modal transportation, natural resource protection, quality design, and diverse housing opportunities. This is a high priority project that has multiple partners for leadership capacity.

Lead Agencies: Harriman Research and Technology Development Corporation, Albany Mayor's Office

Partnerships: Dept. of Development and Planning, NYS Office of General Services, University at Albany, Private Developers, City School District, Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability

Potential Funding sources: Private and state funding

O-4. [Implement the initiatives outlined in the Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability.](#)

The Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability Program establishes a thorough agenda for coordinating the city's energy conservation and sustainability initiatives.

- Creating a baseline inventory of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that identifies all sources of energy and GHG emissions from government operations and the community as a whole (completed).
- Reducing energy consumption in municipal operations.
- Communicating the city's energy and sustainability goals and accomplishments to residents, businesses, and institutions.
- Educating residents and businesses about energy conservation and sustainability initiatives.
- Promoting multi-modal transportation choices to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).
- Incentivizing energy-efficiency and renewable energy technologies in construction and rehabilitation projects.
- Water conservation.

- Green infrastructure.
- Natural resource protection.
- Increase recycling and reduce the solid waste stream.

The energy conservation and sustainability initiatives of the Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability address strategies across multiple systems, including Transportation, Natural Resources, and Utilities and Infrastructure and is a significant leverage point for establishing Albany as a green community. Many initiatives are either completed or are well underway. This is considered an ongoing program that will operate throughout the planning period.

Lead Agency: Albany Mayor's Office

Partnerships: Dept. General Services, NYS DEC, Albany County, CDTA, NYSERDA, NYS Climate Change Office

Potential Funding sources: Partner contributions, volunteer members, Promise Neighborhood Grant

O-5. [Lead and support an education task force to develop a new urban education agenda](#)

The City should play a leadership role in and actively support the Albany Promise project, a multi-disciplinary consortium of partners dedicated to improving public education in the City of Albany.

The Albany Promise will serve the children and families of the Arbor Hill, West Hill and South End neighborhoods within the City of Albany, NY. The targeted communities are the most impoverished in the city and county and are designated as Federal Enterprise and/or Empowerment Zones because of their concentrated levels of poverty and high unemployment. Students living in the target neighborhoods generally attend Albany High School, a Persistently Lowest-Achieving school, with a 54% graduation rate in 2010. SUNY and its partners propose to create a continuum of solutions to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of the children and youth of the target neighborhoods by building on their existing Albany Cradle-through-Career Network, a community of practice with over 75 members representing stakeholder groups that include community residents, education leaders, business leaders, public officials and local, State and Federal agencies.

The task force should consist of the Mayor, city planning staff, and key elected officials, representatives from the Albany School District, charter schools, the State Board of Regents, University at Albany-SUNY, College of St. Rose, Union University, Sage Colleges,

Albany Medical Center, Albany Memorial Hospital, Albany Veteran's Hospital, St. Peter's Hospital, and major private sector employers. The areas of focus for this project should include:

- Form a partnership that bridges city leaders, the city's schools, institutions, and the business community to share information and act as an "incubator" of innovative education programs.
- Establish and work to meet targets for measuring educational performance using indicators from the National Cooperative Education Statistics System.
- Address and integrate the divided education system.
- Discuss the benefits and potential impacts of charter schools on the Albany City School District.
- Coordinate school facility planning with community and neighborhood needs.
- Market the positive accomplishments of public schools.
- Develop pilot programs between the business community and schools in low-income neighborhoods.
- Involve the business community in planning for adult education and workforce training to match needed skills with education.
- Develop an outreach/mentorship program where students from local universities visit public schools to increase awareness of opportunities for higher education in Albany.
- Support and expand the efforts of local colleges, universities, and other organizations to expose public school students to the benefits of higher education through college visits, after-school programs, and outreach.

Preparing low-income children for K-5 schooling, and monitoring their success throughout their school career is critical to improving educational performance and addressing performance gap for success in high school and beyond. Strategies for preparation in early childhood include pre-natal care, home visits from a registered nurse following birth, and pre-school programs to prepare children for primary school. With this in mind, one of the highest priority projects overseen by the Task Force should include:

- Partnering with the city's healthcare institutions (e.g., Albany Medical Center, Albany Memorial Hospital, Albany Veteran's Hospital, St. Peter's Hospital) to increase access for all residents to prenatal and early childhood health care.
- Baby College, a nine-week parenting workshop to expectant parents and those raising a child up to three years old. The workshops promote reading to children and verbal discipline over corporal punishment.
- An all-day pre-kindergarten program that gets children ready to enter kindergarten.

- Extending school hours to accommodate after school programs, including academic enrichment, homework support, sports and recreation activities, arts and cultural activities, and community service projects.

Early childhood health care and primary school preparation is strongly tied to social service strategies and especially educational improvement for low income residents. This project would require significant leadership, staff capacity and coordination among agencies. Substantial financial investment would also be required but could be shared among partners. This should be project should be coordinated under the Education task force.

Education was identified as the highest priority component in the Social system, which was given the second highest priority among all systems by participants in Community Forum 3. Forming education partnerships is also interconnected between the Social and Institutions systems. Improving public education is considered a significant leverage point for improving Albany's image and quality of life. The cost of forming an education task force is low, relying mostly on volunteers, but the leadership capacity required would be high. Given the importance of improving educational opportunities in the city, this should be initiated immediately and considered an ongoing program that continues through the planning period.

Lead Agencies: Albany School District, Albany Mayor's Office

Partnerships: Common Council, Albany Dept. of Development and Planning, charter schools, the State Board of Regents, SUNY, College of St. Rose, Union University, Sage Colleges, Albany Medical Center, Albany Memorial Hospital, Albany Veteran's Hospital, St. Peter's Hospital, major private sector employers, NYS Department of Education, Albany Housing Authority, City of Albany, City School District of Albany, Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region, Albany Family Education Alliance, University at Albany, United Way of the Greater Capital Region, Center for Economic Growth, Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce, Hudson Valley Community College, Turner Construction Company, Empire State College, Whitney M. Young Health Services

Potential Funding sources: Partner contributions, volunteer members, Promise Neighborhood Grant

O-6. Implement the Bicycle Master Plan.

The City should work cooperatively with the CDTC, New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), Albany County, and neighboring communities to coordinate development and implementation of the bikeway network.

- Encourage bicycle-friendly development by adopting site plan review criteria re-

quiring bikeway routes, bike parking, and other end of trip facilities.

- Develop bicycle infrastructure through design guidelines, implementing the bike-way network, signage, transit integration, and the development and implementation of a Complete Streets program.
- Ensure maintenance of bikeways and develop standards for bikeway maintenance in construction zones.
- Encourage cycling through transportation demand management initiatives, web based information, bike week/month campaigns, bike-share programs, and providing bike parking at City events.
- Fund a full or part-time cycling coordinator to work for the City of Albany.
- Incorporate a public education campaign.

Implementation of the bicycle master plan has multiple system interconnections, including Transportation, Social, Natural Resources, and Utilities and Infrastructure. The Bicycle Master Plan is also a significant leverage point for establishing Albany as a green community. This project includes a number of capital improvements that will take significant time and capital.

Lead Agencies: Dept. of Development and Planning, Dept. of General Services, Division of Traffic Safety

Partnerships: Albany Bicycle Coalition, NYS DOT, CDTC, Albany County Dept. of Public Works, Adjacent Municipalities

Potential Funding sources: NY DOT SAFETEA-LU; NY DOT TIGER II Discretionary Grant Program, NYS DOS – LWRP grant

O-7. Complete and implement the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Plan.

The City has already developed an extensive inventory of vacant and abandoned properties and administers the Albany Vacant Building Registry, a national best practice. Albany also maintains an extremely successful Vacant Building Court – a monthly court date reserved specifically for vacant building registry and code violation cases. Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Plan, which augments these programs and aims to reverse the trend of neighborhood disinvestment and abandonment throughout the City. This plan emphasizes key focus areas to combat abandonment and blight:

- Review and Diagnosis
- Acquisition and Land Banking
- Strategic Disposition
- Abandonment Prevention

Major programs that will be created and administered by the Neighborhood Revitaliza-

tion team include a strategic property acquisition fund, the City of Albany Land Bank, a comprehensive disposition strategy and the creation of Choose Albany – the City's campaign to promote homeownership and City living, which began its pilot program in 2011. The Strategic Plan should be completed and the projects outlined should be implemented. Suggested code and process changes should be considered and made to facilitate the success of this initiative.

Controlling vacant and abandoned properties and encouraging adaptive reuse is a major strategy within the Housing and Neighborhoods system that also overlaps with the Economy and Community Form systems. Since the city is currently working on a vacant and abandoned properties strategy, a formal adaptive reuse strategy could be incorporated into that effort, limiting cost and staff capacity. The strategic plan is already underway, with staff and leadership capacity established.

Lead Agencies: Dept. of Development and Planning

Partnerships: Dept. of Fire and Emergency Services, Albany Police Dept., Division of Building and Codes, Corporation Counsel, Board of Zoning Appeals, Planning Board, Historic Resources Commission, Albany County, community development corporations, Affordable Housing Partnership, Empire State Future, Capital City Housing, Habitat for Humanity

Potential Funding sources: Corporate sponsorships, local lending institutions, foundation grants, donation, staff resources, HUD

[O-8. Implement a brownfield redevelopment strategy, starting with preparation of a Step Two Brownfield Opportunities Area \(BOA\) Nominations Study.](#)

The BOA program encompasses three steps: the Pre-Nomination Study, the Nomination Study, and the Implementation Strategy. The Step One Pre-Nomination Study has been completed for Albany in coordination with the Comprehensive Plan and can be found in Appendix A. The remaining steps should be the focus of a brownfield redevelopment implementation project for Albany:

- Step 2: The Nomination Study is the second step of the BOA process. This step entails an extensive inventory and evaluation of data and trends impacting the study area's redevelopment potential, including market and economic analysis, identification of redevelopment strategic sites, and formulation of strategies to move redevelopment forward within the framework of a Master Plan. Effective and inclusive community participation is a key part of the Step 2 planning process.
- Step 3: The final step of the BOA program is to develop an Implementation Strategy, which identifies the specific actions that will be taken to implement the Master Plan

recommendations for redevelopment of the strategic sites.

Brownfield remediation and redevelopment has been identified as a strategy across multiple systems, including Community Form, Economy, Housing and Neighborhoods, and Natural Resources. Brownfield redevelopment is also indicated under several strategies as a leverage point for improving Albany's image and quality of life.

Lead Agency: Albany Dept. of Development and Planning

Partnerships: NYS DOS

Potential Funding sources: NYS DOS – Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program, NYS DEC, NYS EPA

4.3 Plan Monitoring

If the Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan is to have maximum value and remain useful over time, it is important to establish ways to monitor success in achieving its vision and goals and implementing the projects described in Section 4.2, as well as to keep it current as circumstances change and new information becomes available. Thus the plan should be thought of not as a static document fixed in time, but rather as an ongoing process and framework to inform more detailed planning, programs, and decision-making as implementation moves forward. This process should incorporate an adaptive management approach (system principle #5) by adjusting implementation actions based on the results of plan monitoring.

Measures of success should be developed for use in the monitoring process to evaluate the effectiveness of plan implementation, including:

- **Timeframes** for initiation of specific actions. Table 3 sets a framework of short, intermediate, long-term, and ongoing timeframes for initiation of the implementation projects. A work plan defining more specific priorities, tasks, timeframes, and resource commitments should be developed as an early implementation action and reviewed and updated throughout the lifespan of the document.
- **Indicators** (metrics) to measure progress in achieving the plan vision and goals. Numeric indicators are used in plan implementation to measure whether or not the outcomes desired by the community are being met. For example, available data on employment and household incomes, educational attainment, and greenhouse gas emissions (baseline inventory developed by the Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustain-

ability) could be tracked to monitor progress in achieving Albany 2030 goals related to employment, education, and climate change mitigation, respectively. Indicators to measure success should be identified as an early implementation action and incorporated into the annual Comprehensive Plan reviews. A list of example indicators for the different plan systems is provided for illustrative purposes in Table 4. Identification of specific indicators to be used in plan monitoring should be based on available data sources (using the Comprehensive Plan data book as a starting point), ease of monitoring, and relevance to the system goals.

Plan System	Potential Indicators
Community Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacant and abandoned properties restored to productive use • Waterfront access points / connections to downtown • Historic properties recognized / preserved
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs created and retained • Household incomes • Downtown vacancy rate (class a, b, c space)
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational attainment (high school graduation rate, residents attending college) • Public health (occurrence of asthma, diabetes, obesity) • Public safety (crime rates)
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modal split (vehicular, transit, biking, walking) • Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) • Bike infrastructure developed

Table 4 Potential Plan Monitoring Indicators

Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality • Brownfields remediated • Citywide tree canopy coverage
Housing and Neighborhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratio of homeowner to rental households • Mixed-income housing balance (affordable vs. market-rate housing development) • Population
Utilities and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy consumption / greenhouse gas emissions (by sector) • Number of “green” projects (buildings, infrastructure) • Combined sewer overflow flooding events
Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments in lieu of taxes by institutions • Number of partnerships/partners on City of Albany and regional initiatives • Institutional investment in Downtown and neighborhoods

- **Dialogue** should be maintained with local citizens, civic groups, implementation partners, regional agencies and municipalities, business and development interests, and other stakeholders on a periodic, ongoing basis to assist in monitoring the effectiveness of plan implementation.

The following checklist is proposed to guide the process of monitoring implementation progress and making periodic updates to the Comprehensive Plan:

REVIEW, ASSESSMENT AND UPDATE

Annual review

The Planning Board (with assistance from the Planning Department) should submit an annual brief to the Common Council on the Comprehensive Plan, outlining implementation progress during the previous year and defining project priorities for implementing the plan over the next year.

The Data Book will also be reviewed annually as new information becomes available to identify new and changing trends. The annual report and review of implementation progress should be coordinated with the City’s capital improvement program to address investment priorities called for by the Comprehensive Plan.

Five-Year Assessment

The five-year assessment will be a more detailed and formal report on plan progress. This will include a description of what significant changes have occurred since plan adoption (or previous assessment or update) and will include an update of specific sections the Data Book. An assessment of indicated performance metrics will also be included.

The five-year assessment will allow for minor amendments and modifications based on changing local dynamics, completion of outlined projects, or the occurrence of major changes in local, regional, state and national trends. Any minor amendment should have opportunity for public input. This assessment will also update and modify project time-frames, and include a more robust revision of the Data Book.

This assessment will be performed by the City of Albany Planning Department and coordinated with the Common Council, Planning Board and an appointed review committee.

10-Year Update

To keep the Comprehensive Plan current and relevant, a process to revise and adopt an updated plan will occur at the 10-year mark after plan adoption. The process of annual reviews and five-year assessments outlined above will reduce the level of effort required to undertake the mid-point update. The update process should include the following:

- Citizen input to ascertain updated needs, priorities, and aspirations for the future.
- Creation of a new Comprehensive Plan Board to guide the update process.
- Analysis of conditions and trends and indicators related to the plan systems since adoption of the Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan.
- Preparation of a Comprehensive Plan Evaluation Report that analyzes the effectiveness of actions taken to implement the plan, identifies opportunities and constraints to implementation, and summarizes trends and challenges that have emerged or changed in the period since plan adoption.
- Revisions to the vision and goals and identification of new strategies, actions, and implementation projects as necessary to address changed circumstances, emerging needs and opportunities, and expressed citizen priorities

Introduction

Vision Statement

Sustainability Building Blocks: The Comprehensive Plan System

Plan Implementation

