



CAPITALIZE ALBANY
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Skyway Feasibility Study Findings and Final Recommended Design Presented

The Region's First and Only Elevated Linear Park to Repurpose I-787 Ramp and Improve Waterfront Connectivity

ALBANY – Capitalize Albany Corporation hosted its third and final event as part of a series that has engaged and informed the public regarding the Skyway's design and engineering. On Thursday, August 9 at the Palace Theatre from 5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m. the engineering, design and economic analyst team discussed the findings of the Skyway feasibility study and presented the final recommended concept based on the community's input. The completed feasibility study has readied the project to move forward with detailed construction-ready drawings to begin implementation of individual components of the park. With Governor Cuomo's previous announcement of \$3.1 million of DOT-funding, the project is able to move forward immediately by decommissioning the ramp and supporting all of the baseline requirements to convert the underutilized infrastructure and open the park. The City of Albany is seeking additional external funds to enhance the park with amenities that will maximize the usage and impact of this new, transformational asset.

"The Skyway will serve as a recreational resource and a key component in connecting the Downtown, Sheridan Hollow, and Arbor Hill neighborhoods, and the Warehouse District to the Hudson River waterfront," said Mayor Kathy Sheehan. "It's a crucial time to make strategic investments at this City gateway by creating a welcoming destination. With the recommended design based on the community's input and study findings completed, we look forward to the project's next steps."

The Skyway is a project that will ultimately result in the conversion of the underutilized I-787 northbound exit ramp from Quay Street to Clinton Avenue — into the Capital Region's first and only elevated linear park. The feasibility study, funded in part by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and Capitalize Albany Corporation, has been developed with the support and feedback from hundreds of local community members who participated in an online survey and multiple public meetings throughout the Skyway design process. The event on Thursday featured an overview of the Skyway's feasibility and traffic impact along with a presentation of the Skyway's proposed design, programming and economic impact.

"The community feedback received was critical throughout the design process and will go a long way towards the project's ultimate success," said Capitalize Albany Corporation president Sarah Reginelli. "The Skyway thinks about our infrastructure as an opportunity. This amenity will

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serve as a Regional attraction and spur additional growth. Beyond even this, the project takes back a portion of I-787 improving walkability and bikeability as well as enhancing sustainability.”

This project has mobilized local stakeholders, residents and members of the community, creating strong consensus at events held as part of the project’s public engagement series, in May at the Palace Theatre and in March at the Albany Heritage Area Visitors Center. The public online survey was made available on the Corporation’s website, shared through social media and local media outlets. It gathered feedback from nearly 500 participants.

In coordination with the New York State Department of Transportation, on April 12 and May 2 the northbound exit ramp was temporarily closed while the design and engineering team conducted site and structural assessments on the future site of the Skyway. On the closure conducted May 2 City department leaders and Mayor Kathy Sheehan participated in the site visit. The on-site assessments provided critical information regarding design elements and potential programming along the Skyway. An important goal as part of the site visit was to better understand and experience how the ramp would function as a linear park, and how initial community feedback could be addressed and incorporated into its design. **Please see photos here:** <https://www.facebook.com/pg/CapitalizeAlbany/photos/>

The property is owned by the New York State Department of Transportation. NYSDOT is working collaboratively with Capitalize Albany towards the project’s success.

The Impact Downtown Albany strategic plan identified that the current exit ramp is underutilized, redundant to other exits, and could offer more to the City, and Region. The Impact Downtown Albany strategic plan, the City’s comprehensive plan, Albany’s Downtown Revitalization Initiative application, the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan and waterfront master plan show demand for, and an economic need to increase connections from downtown to the waterfront.

The completed conversion of the exit ramp will support transforming the underutilized infrastructure into a landscaped multi-use connection, from downtown Albany and surrounding neighborhoods including Arbor Hill and Sheridan Hollow, to the Corning Riverfront Park. Upon conversion — the former ramp would serve as a fully ADA compliant promenade, bike route and linear park making valuable connections to the Hudson River — dramatically increasing accessibility to both downtown and the waterfront. In addition to serving as a waterfront connection, the Skyway would be an amenity for Albany’s downtown neighborhoods, creating an experience for its users and becoming a regional destination.

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The project's sustainability impact will be an additional benefit. Once completed, the project would function much like a green roof, absorbing, filtering and diverting storm runoff that would otherwise enter the City's combined sewers and eventually the Hudson.

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About Capitalize Albany Corporation: *A catalyst for economic growth, Capitalize Albany Corporation facilitates transformational development projects, serving as the City of Albany's economic development organization. A registered 501(c) (3) not-for-profit organization implementing programs and resources to create, retain, and attract business in the City of Albany.*

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