



# City of Kingston, NY

## Comprehensive Plan

January 11, 2015

Prepared with technical assistance from:

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# Introduction

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## Background

Kingston 2025 is the first unified and comprehensive evaluation of the land use and settlement pattern within the City of Kingston since the original Comprehensive Plan was written in 1961. The original 1961 plan was a Comprehensive Development Plan in the strictest sense. It prescribed a precise mix of land uses on a block-by-block basis to achieve the open space, housing, commercial and employment goals of the City. It identified specific street improvements and for the Uptown business area, it even included a very specific physical plan including a pedestrian mall, which was never constructed. It goes without saying that in the 50+ years since preparation of the 1961 Plan, that Kingston has changed dramatically.

Since 1961, the City has made a number of changes to its land use regulations, some proactive based on study and planning, others reactive based on certain evolving trends or in response to specific development proposals. The City of Kingston has continuously undertaken focused land use studies since the 1980s. The following is a list of plans commissioned by the City, County or other institutions that contain land use recommendations for the City over the last 25 years and prior to preparation of this Comprehensive Plan:

- Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP)
- Waterfront Implementation Plan
- UCP Management Plan (Heritage Area Plan)
- UC Transportation Council Plans
  - Intermodal Facility Site Location And Conceptual Design Analysis
  - Route 32 at Fair Street Intersection Study (2006)
  - Uptown Stockade Area Transportation Plan (2009)
  - City of Kingston / Town of Ulster Quiet Zone and Pedestrian Safety and Mobility Analysis: 2006
  - I-587 Intersection Study
  - Ulster County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan
  - Washington Avenue Corridor Study
- Kingston Climate Action Plan (2012) and 2010 Community-Wide & Local Government Operations Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory
- Central Broadway Plan
- Broadway West Plan
- Hudson Landing Proposed Development Design Book
- Land Use and Zoning Analysis for County Owned Properties in the City of Kingston and Town of Ulster
- Economic Base Diversification Master Plan

The sheer volume of relevant planning documents indicates the desire of the City for ordered and well-planned growth.

The problem confronting Kingston in late 2011, when the Comprehensive Plan update process began, was that these plans were disparate. They were prepared at various times, by various interests and their focus varied in geographic relevance. Because of this, their recommendations were at times inconsistent. Additionally, because of the sheer volume of planning documents, the City was unlikely to look to this broad catalog of plans for guidance as new concerns evolved. The City's planning policies had become unwieldy.

To remedy this the City undertook the update of its 1961 Comprehensive Plan. Originally conceived as a necessary update required to update and streamline the City's development regulations, the City quickly came to understand the value of the Comprehensive Planning Process as a means to engage the public, look to old problems with fresh perspectives, compile the extensive catalog of preceding planning work, and to focus attention on areas of the City that had not been the subject of intensive previous planning.

## What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a document prepared by a local government that looks at the interrelated functions of a community, establishes aspirations based on public and stakeholder input and establishes strategies to achieve those aspirations by coordinating the efforts of local government staff, departments and regulatory boards, and to a lesser extent, those efforts of higher layers of government such as the County, State and Federal governments. At its core, a comprehensive plan is a document that sets a destination for a community and maps a course to get there.

A Comprehensive Plan is not required under New York State Law. However, New York State law requires that zoning, if adopted by a City, be in harmony with a "well considered plan." Generally, all actions of the City Council, departments and regulatory boards should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. New York State Legislative statutes enacted since 1993 have required local and state government review of local actions to determine whether they are consistent with the comprehensive plan. Additionally, other government agencies, whether they be adjoining communities or higher levels of government, must consider the policies and goals of the Comprehensive Plan when considering actions that may impact the City.

Before the City Council adopts a new plan or any amendments to the existing plan, the City will hold a public hearing in order to allow for comments from City residents and other interested parties. This updated comprehensive plan will be subject to the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) under article eight of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law. Once the plan is adopted by the City Council it will remain on file in the City Planning Office. The adopted Comprehensive Plan shall be reviewed for relevance **REGULARLY** to ensure the document continues to adequately meet the needs of the City.

This plan sets forth goals and objectives for the City as a whole, while specifically focusing on areas including Uptown, Midtown and the Rondout/Waterfront areas. For the Rondout and Uptown areas, this plan largely consolidates the planning work performed previously. For Midtown this plan includes new policies for revitalizing this challenged area of the City that has seen the departure of its core industries, and that has developed around an obsolete auto-dependant, small-lot strip corridor.

Balancing economic development while retaining and fostering the highest quality of life for the City's residents is of the greatest importance in this planning effort.

## Process

In order to prepare this plan the City created a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC) and Advisory Committee (CPAC) which consisted of members of the City Council, Planning Board, Zoning Board, Community Development Agency, Planning Staff and citizens from a broad range of backgrounds including business, civic and environmental organizations to provide a range of perspectives on planning and development issues.

The CPSC/CPAC has convened a number of times to pour over the significant catalog of existing planning studies and to discuss issues confronting the City. Shuster-Turner, the planning consultant, has prepared and compiled a number of planning studies including:

- Existing Land Use Maps;
- Environmental Constraints Maps;
- Public Facilities Maps;
- City Staff and Departmental Interviews;
- Review and Report on Past Planning Efforts;
- Review of Variances;
- Review of Statutory and Case Law Compliance of Existing Codes;
- Consistency of Land Use and Zoning analysis;
- Demographic conditions analysis.

The CPSC/CPAC then embarked on a three-phased public outreach effort. This effort was comprised of:

- Online and paper surveys on a number of topical areas including opinion on existing conditions; support for potential policies; and prioritization of existing needs;
- Identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) in a small-group workshop meeting;
- Online submission of suggestions through the City website;

These prior reports, analyses and public outreach processes culminated in the development of a Vision for the City, adopted by the Steering Committee and upon which the second phase of plan preparation is based.

While the process of Plan reconnaissance was ongoing, additional plans, studies and initiatives by City Agencies and not-for-profits were in preparation. Shortly after the Vision was adopted by the CPSC/CPAC, several of these plans were introduced to the CPSC/CPAC through a series of presentations.

These include:

- Kingston Parks and Recreation Master Plan - adopted by the Common Council in January of 2013;
- Kingston Urban Agricultural Initiative - accepted by the Common Council in February 2014 and forwarded to the Plan consultants for consideration;
- Planning for Rising Waters: Final report of the City of Kingston Tidal Waterfront Flooding Task Force adopted by the Common Council on November 12, 2013;
- Kingston Bluestone Survey - Final report presented to Common Council - November 2013;
- Complete Streets Advisory Council - Draft plan presented to Common Council in September of 2011;
- Kingston Conservation Advisory Council Natural Resource Inventory - Continues to be under preparation , however, three preliminary reports have been provided including:
  - Preliminary Review of Open Space and Natural Resources for the City of Kingston, NY DRAFT December 2013
  - Natural Areas and Wildlife in Your Community: A Habitat Summary Prepared for the City of Kingston (May 2014)
  - Significant Habitats in Selected Areas of the City of Kingston (2014)
- Trolley Museum of New York - Potential to extend Trolley service along the waterfront and to downtown (Midtown).
- Patricia Murphy - a local historian addressed the CPSC with recommendations to protect historic resources;

It is noted, that following commissioning of this plan update, Ulster County, at the request of the City, initiated a transportation plan for the Broadway Corridor in Kingston that includes a land use element in its scope of work. This Broadway Corridor transportation plan dovetails with the intensive focus of this plan on Midtown. It has been determined, that these two plans should proceed cooperatively in developing strategies for this critical area of the City. This ensures that the County and City will proceed with compatible policies for revitalization.

Also following the adoption of the Vision, the City Community Development Agency has selected consultants to prepare its Phase 3 Brownfield Opportunity Area Plan. This Plan will likely contain relevant land use recommendations that will need to be considered in future plan updates.

## State Environmental Quality Review

State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) identifies the adoption of a municipality's land use plan as an action that is presumed likely to have a significant impact on the environment. SEQR particularly recommends that a City prepare a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (Generic EIS) for the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan.

Generic EISs are broader than site- or project-specific EISs. Because a Comprehensive Plan only sets policy governing future land use and land development, and because zoning only regulates land use and land development, details as to site-specifics (location, size, topography, environmental resources,

habitat, social setting, etc.) and to project-specifics (square footage, height, operational and construction parameters, etc.) are not available. Therefore SEQR requires that Generic EISs should discuss the logic and rationale for the choices advanced.

SEQR instructs municipalities to base Generic EISs on conceptual information and to identify important natural resources, important cultural features, patterns and character. Generic EISs should discuss the implications of policies that narrow future options (such as regulations) as well as analyze hypothetical situations that are likely to occur (such as increased population with increasing areas where residential development is permitted). (See 6 NYCRR 617.10)

Kingston 2025 by its very nature is its own Generic EIS. The Plan analyses existing and evolving concerns which the City is confronting, considers the existing built and regulatory environment, considers market pressures and proposes policies that will serve to achieve the social and economic needs of the community as well as mitigate potential impacts currently threatening natural, historic and cultural resources under baseline conditions.

However, in balancing the triad of social, economic and environmental needs, a policy intended to achieve one factor, may result in impacts to others. For example, the provision of affordable housing to achieve social equity, may result in economic impacts from higher demand for tax-funded services and could result in increased traffic due to higher densities typical of affordable housing.

Because of this, Kingston 2025 not only describes existing conditions, and the policies sought to achieve the City's goals, but a Generic Environmental Impact Discussion follows each objective proposed in this Plan. That Generic Environmental Impact Discussion serves as a consideration of environmental, economic and social impacts that may occur as a result of proposed policies and discusses the implications of these policies and the reasoning of the City in balancing the social, economic and environmental needs.

This document serves as the Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the policies and recommendations contained herein. Because of this, thresholds and criteria are established and have been incorporated throughout the policies of this document, and within which environmental impacts are anticipated to be minimized to the maximum extent practicable. In adopting these policies, Kingston has considered a range of acceptable alternatives, and found that among this range of acceptable alternatives, and in consideration of economic and social needs of the community, the policies contained herein best mitigate environmental impacts, while most effectively achieving the City's Vision.

## **Format**

Kingston 2025 is intended to be a concise and eminently usable document. The Plan relies on significant analysis of existing conditions, prior planning studies, and public outreach. Were all of this background included in the document, the Plan would be extremely unwieldy and its usefulness severely limited. Nevertheless, this document appends by reference the Kingston 2025 Online Databook at [www.kingston-ny.com/2025](http://www.kingston-ny.com/2025). This databook will be an online repository of the adopted plans and background information upon which this plan has been developed.



Further, this Plan has been organized into several chapters including:

- Introduction - A description of process and background
- Local and Regional Setting - A very brief description of the existing locational, historic and physical disposition of the community
- Vision - The Vision Statement developed by the CPSC/CPAC that has guided plan preparation and should guide future decisions by government
- Plan - The Plan section of Kingston 2025 is broken up into several chapters covering subject matter and specific geographic areas of the City as set forth below. Each section is organized with a brief introduction, one or more "goals," which are broad aspirational statements, "objectives," which are more detailed targets to be achieved and "strategies" which are policy recommendations to achieve those targets. It should be clearly noted that the City intends to work toward achieving objectives, even where strategies are not identified. Further, the strategies listed are not exhaustive. The City should continue to develop strategies in order to achieve the objectives, and update the plan with new strategies (or remove strategies that have been implemented or are found to be ineffective) as often as possible. Lastly a Generic Environmental Discussion is included discussing the strategies being recommended.
  - Overview
  - Housing
  - Open Space Resources
  - Economic Development
  - Transportation and Mobility
  - Historic Resources
  - Public Facilities
  - Midtown Core Area
  - Uptown Core Area
  - Rondout Core Area and Hudson River Waterfront
  - Future
- Timing and Responsibility - This section is a matrix that not only summarizes the recommendations of the plan, but sets a target time frame for implementation, identifies the City Agency or Department with primary responsibility and any potential strategic partners involved.



# Local and Regional Setting

Kingston is located on the Hudson River in the Mid Hudson Region of the Hudson Valley. It is the County Seat, has excellent highway access along the New York State Thruway and is in close proximity to both New York City and the City of Albany. Kingston also is a gateway to the Catskills, which, along with the Hudson River waterfront on its eastern border, lends a bucolic, rural backdrop to the distinctly urban City environment.

## History

The village of Kingston was originally founded in 1652 as a farming settlement and named Esopus after a Native American tribe of the Lenni Lenape that inhabited the area. The Dutch settlement was then renamed to Wiltwijk, which became Kingston, when the English took possession.

For a brief time in 1777, the Village of Kingston became the first capital of New York, when New York City was occupied by the British and Albany was in danger of attack from the North. In October 1777, General Vaughn was sailing north on the Hudson River to rendezvous with General Burgoyne in Albany, when Burgoyne's Army was defeated at Saratoga. General Vaughn instead disembarked on the shores of the Rondout marching on the Capital. Vaughn's army burnt 300 buildings to the ground, but many of the walls of the stone buildings remained and the Village was rebuilt, with many of the buildings preserved to this day located around the Stockade District.

In 1872, the Village of Kingston, hamlet of Wilbur and the Village of Rondout, which was the eastern terminus of the Delaware and Hudson Canal merged to form the City of Kingston. At the time the region was deeply involved in the shipment of materials to New York City, including bluestone mined in the Catskills, limestone for cement mined from Ponckhockie and other areas of Ulster County, brick manufactured along the Rondout Creek and Hudson River and coal originating in the Pocono Mountains and transported east on the D&H Canal to the port at Rondout.



*“In 1872, the Village of Kingston, hamlet of Wilbur and the Village of Rondout, which was the eastern terminus of the Delaware and Hudson Canal merged to form the City of Kingston.”*

- History of Kingston

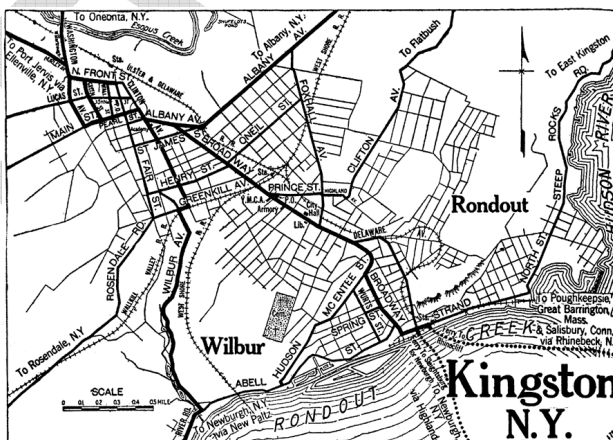
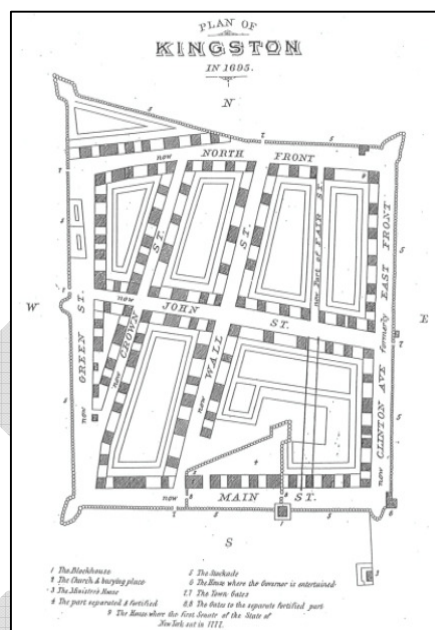
## Existing Neighborhoods

Because of its being founded in a merger of two villages, Kingston has become a City of neighborhoods. "Uptown" corresponds with the original Village of Kingston and is located at the western end of the City. It is generally noted for its historic stone houses and three-story mixed-use buildings, pedestrian scale commercial streets, and County offices. This area is also identified as the "Stockade District", an area designated on the National Register of Historic Places, that is an eight-block area originally demarcated by raised berms and stockade walls upon which the original Dutch settlement was situated.

At the eastern end of the city is the "Rondout" area corresponding with the original Village of Rondout. It is also noted for historic mixed-use pedestrian scale commercial streets, but of four-story heights, and dominated by restaurants and recreational uses, as well as some continuing active water-dependant industry along the Rondout Creek.

These two original community centers are linked by Broadway. At the center of this linkage is "Midtown" a district that concentrated many of the community facilities of the two merged villages – City Hall, the central post office, the original armory, Kingston Hospital, Kingston High School among others. The area was more recently built up than the two villages, much of it heavier commercial and manufacturing uses located at a confluence of rail lines in the center of the City. This area was historically dominated by the Textile industry, but since has become a regional center for Arts and Cultural uses.

Several other smaller neighborhoods sprang up around these three centers, including Ponckhockie, located near the confluence of the Rondout Creek and Hudson River and Wilbur, a more rural area located in the southern area of the City.



## Regional Accessibility

Primary regional access to Kingston is from Exit 19 of the New York State Thruway (Interstate 87). Other regional access is provided via Route 9W to the south; Route 32 which provides access to the south and to the Town of Ulster to the north; Route 28 which provides access to the Catskills to the west. The Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge (NY State Route 199) provides a crossing of the Hudson River approximately 2 miles north of the City.

Regional bus service is provided by Adirondack Trailways from Uptown Kingston. Regional Train service is provided by Amtrak from Rhinecliff directly across the Hudson River from Ponckhockie and Metro-North service providing access to the New York City metropolitan commuter rail system is available from Poughkeepsie approximately 20 miles to the south. Metro-North provides rail access to New York City and multiple lines radiating from three train hubs in Manhattan and Secaucus, New Jersey provide access to the New York City commuter shed including New Jersey, Long Island, Connecticut and the lower Hudson Valley. Regional air service is provided from Stewart International Airport 39 miles to the south in the Town of New Windsor or 65 miles to the north from Albany International Airport. General Aviation access is available at the Kingston-Ulster Airport, approximately three miles north of the City, but this airport has a limited runway length that precludes use by all but the smallest general aviation jets.

The City also contains the active West Shore Hudson River freight rail line owned by CSX. This line runs from Albany south to NJ and provides access to the national rail freight network.

## **Physically Constrained Land**

The City has several areas that are not suitable for intensive future development. This principally involves existing flood hazard areas, wetlands, steep slopes, as well as low-lying areas along the tidal Hudson River and Rondout Creek. Not surprisingly, most of these lands have remained generally undeveloped. One exception to this, is the flood hazard area along the Hudson River and Rondout Creek, where water access first fueled water-dependent industry, and later transitioned to the current mix of restaurant, entertainment, recreational and cultural uses alongside remnant industry and brownfields.

Where existing areas remain underdeveloped in these regions of the City, the City should consider significantly restricting future development. Generally, significantly physically constrained lands would best be limited to use for agriculture, open space, recreation, and rural-density residential. Physically constrained lands are shown in Figure 6 as the gray hatched areas.

Further exploration of these physically constrained areas is likely not necessary as these areas are generally undeveloped and not suited for future development.

## **Sea Level Rise and Climate Action**

The City recently prepared “Planning for Rising Waters”: a final report of the City of Kingston Tidal Flooding Task Force was adopted in November 2013 to the Common Council. This report has examined several scenarios for sea level rise and contains recommendations for lands that are likely to be physically constrained in the future. That report concluded that global sea levels were likely to rise by between 33 and 68 inches by 2100, and included 24 clear recommendations for addressing sea level rise.

Recommendations in that report, as well as the preceding Climate Action Plan, are intended to help mitigate losses from rising sea levels, and to promote more sustainable development practices. These actions aim to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions that collectively, with global greenhouse gas emissions, lead to global climate change that can constrain additional land in the future. Many of the recommendations in the document are relevant to operational actions, but several land use and policy recommendations are made that are of value to land use planning.

Recommendations of the plan relevant to land use include:

1. Develop a Kingston Waterfront Long-term Resiliency Plan;
2. Reduce Kingston's greenhouse gas emissions through implementation of Kingston's Climate Action Plan, green infrastructure and green architecture;
3. Ensure that zoning designations consider increasing risk and vulnerability from flooding and sea-level rise;
4. Require that proposals for new development of any kind in the Flood Hazard Overlay District take flood risk into account;
5. Reduce stormwater, upland flooding and combined sewer overflows through green infrastructure and best stormwater management practices;
6. Research, evaluate and implement changes to City building and zoning codes that will increase resiliency and are cost-effective and socially equitable;
7. Study the feasibility of using policy, zoning and building codes to achieve creative, water-dependent and water-enhanced uses that are resilient, including elevated, amphibious, or floating structures, wharves, berms and elevated rights of way;
8. Evaluate the use of natural buffers and green shoreline infrastructure to reduce flood risk and erosion and conserve natural resource functions;
9. Ensure opportunities exist for open space and recreation over the long term;
10. Revise emergency management planning documents;
11. Ensure safe access and evacuation along the waterfront during regular flood events.

The City of Kingston Climate Action Plan made several recommendations regarding measures that can be employed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance operational and energy efficiencies, reduce energy costs, support local job growth, and adapt to a changing climate while improving quality of life, saving taxpayer dollars, and promoting social justice. The policies of this document are incorporated hereto by reference and include recommendations for government operations, facilities, equipment, and decision-making considerations. Specific land use policies included in the Climate Action Plan and particularly relevant to land use include:

- a. Adopt goals and policies that promote a compact, transit oriented, bikeable and walkable community; promote infill development; prohibit new development in floodplains and preserve and protect open space, biodiversity, and water supplies.
- b. Integrate and advance Transit Oriented Design;
- c. Promote and expand accessibility to transit;
- d. Actively support, promote and implement the City's Complete Street Policy;
- e. Develop a Bicycling Master Plan;
- f. Improve Bike Infrastructure, Create Bicycle Friendly Zones;
- g. Develop a Pedestrian Master Plan;
- h. Improve sidewalks;
- i. Create rail trails;
- j. Use the authority of the City's Planning Board to assure that new development projects reflect the community's desires for a low carbon/low emissions future;
- k. Develop City government policies that promote the use of transit, carpooling, vanpooling, flex scheduling, and examine telecommuting where appropriate;
- l. Explore the feasibility of planning, permitting, zoning, and providing infrastructure necessary to accommodate electric vehicles;

- m. Adopt a local 'green infrastructure' ordinance promoting the use of rain gardens, vegetated swales, green roofs, porous pavement that recharge groundwater systems or retain water on-site to the maximum practical extent instead of detaining and conveying stormwater off-site;
- n. Use, demonstrate and promote green infrastructure in City projects, on City properties;
- o. Enhance municipal codes and regulations to: Encourage non-toxic land management practices; encourage and promote the use of native plants; encourage and promote the use of water conserving landscape plants and techniques known as xeriscaping; support and strengthen tree planting and management; integrate standard 'green' principles for tree planting and permeability requirements;
- p. Consider the development of a comprehensive Urban Forestry Master Plan as part of the Comprehensive Master Planning process;
- q. Continue to actively support the efforts to advance community and school gardens in the City of Kingston to encourage local food production;
- r. Create and adopt local "Green Building" standards;

These two important planning efforts provide policies and recommendations that should be considered broadly as the City formulates long-term plans. Several specific land use plan recommendations have been incorporated herein, but any significant long-term land use policy decisions should consider both plans as guideposts for energy efficiency, coastal vulnerability, sustainability and making climate-smart decisions.



# Vision

Long range planning begins with a community's vision for its future. The Vision statement provides a short succinct statement against which all policies and proposals can easily be tested. *Kingston 2025's* Vision Statement is based on extensive public outreach including:

- Selection of a Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee and Steering Committee (CPAC and CPSC) from a diverse assemblage of citizens engaged in civic, business and trade organizations as well as City Staff;
- Online and paper surveys on a number of topical areas including sentiment on existing conditions; support for potential policies; and prioritization of existing needs;
- Identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) in a well-attended small-group workshop meeting;
- Online submission of suggestions through the City website;
- Engagement of other planning initiatives proceeding at the same time as the Plan preparation;

This helped to lead the public to an understanding of how they would like to see their community develop over the next 20 years. Based on the significant public input received, the CPAC/CPSC distilled this stakeholder input into a Vision Statement.

In developing this Plan to achieve this Vision, it was the desire of the CPAC/CPSC to create Guiding Principals upon which to base Goals, Objectives and Strategies. These principals are intended to ensure that the Plan balances economic, social, and environmental interests in promoting a sustainable and enduring plan.

## Vision Statement

*"In 2025, Kingston will be a City of Neighborhoods - vibrant neighborhoods diverse in land use and diverse in population. Development will be focused around four cores at the Stockade District; at the Rondout; at a future Hudson Landing Core; and at a new core in Midtown centered at the existing Ulster Performing Arts Center. These cores will be comprised of mixed-use centers with multifamily residential incorporated with ground floor retail; pedestrian and bicycle friendly streets; active use of sidewalks; traditional architecture and historic identity. These nodes will be connected not only by a network of streets supporting slow-speed/high-capacity vehicular travel, but by a network of on-road and off-road bicycle paths, and by public transit ranging from shuttle bus to trolley. Extending outward from the cores, lower densities of mostly well-maintained and predominantly owner-occupied two-family and single-family residential neighborhoods will dominate, with occasional neighborhood corner stores and well-designed townhouses and multifamily residential interspersed. Remote or environmentally-sensitive areas will remain as open space, agriculture, forestry or used for clustered, very low-density residential. Employment opportunities will be diverse from County government, historic tourism and specialty retail in Uptown; to arts and new media in Midtown; to cultural, water-related, restaurant and entertainment uses in the Rondout; and to clean, green industry along existing active rail lines and within the Kingston Business Park."*

- Comprehensive Plan Committee

These principals are of equal importance regardless of order:

- Ethnic, cultural, and income diversity is a desirable element of Kingston's social fabric and land use must provide a range of housing choices in support of that diversity;
- Historic and cultural resources of the City must be strongly protected and leveraged to the maximum extent to attract residents, businesses and tourism thereby creating and promoting economic development;
- Employment opportunities offering a living wage should be accessible from all residential neighborhoods without reliance on commutation in individual automobiles;
- Access to household needs including basic consumables such as basic clothing, sanitary goods, cleaning supplies and nutritious food is vital in all of Kingston's neighborhoods including access to land for individual or community agriculture (urban agriculture and community gardens);
- It is preferable to focus future development on lands in existing developed areas (in-fill), and in obsolete heavy commercial and industrial areas (brownfields) than on virgin undeveloped land (greenfields);
- A land use pattern with a mix of uses centered around neighborhoods is preferable to a land use pattern with commercial uses provided along vehicular corridors (sprawl);
- Kingston's streets must be accessible to non-motorized modes of transportation and respect all ages and mobility levels including cyclists, pedestrians, and wheelchair-bound persons (complete streets);
- Kingston affects and is affected by land use patterns in surrounding communities;
- Kingston must accommodate the needs of a range of industries including the arts, retail, food, recreation, tourism, medical, office, manufacturing, and public service to foster strong employment opportunities and economic sustainability;
- Recreational offerings must be diverse and robust including both public and private and indoor and outdoor options;
- Land use planning must not only consider existing physically and environmentally constrained land, but also land that may be constrained in the future due to rising sea level and global climate change;
- Conservation of open space and sensitive habitat is as crucial as development of those areas that are well suited to use of land;
- Sustainable approaches to stormwater management (green infrastructure like green roofs, rain gardens, porous pavement and landscaped swales) are preferable as being more efficient and less prone to failure;
- All land use and construction practices should promote energy efficiency and sustainability;

# Plan: Overview

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The guiding principal of the plan for Kingston is to concentrate density and retail commercial uses in three core areas: Uptown centered at the Stockade District, Midtown centered at the Ulster Performing Arts Center, and Rondout centered at the foot of Broadway. The planned Hudson Landing development on the Hudson Riverfront will form a fourth core neighborhood based on detailed design guidelines and neotraditional development standards. (See Generalized Land Use Plan Map)

These mixed core areas should be centers for local life providing nutritious fresh food, necessary personal services, transportation and mass transit options, employment opportunities at a range of incomes, a diversity of housing options, and nearby public and private recreational facilities. Each core area should be focused around complimentary and non-competing niches, with Uptown concentrated around historic resources and historic-based tourism, County Government, and an eclectic mix of specialty retail; Midtown concentrated around the arts, education, new media, healthcare, culture, ethnic foods, and growing and selling of locally grown produce; and Rondout as a center for waterfront tourism, restaurants, active recreation and local specialty retail.

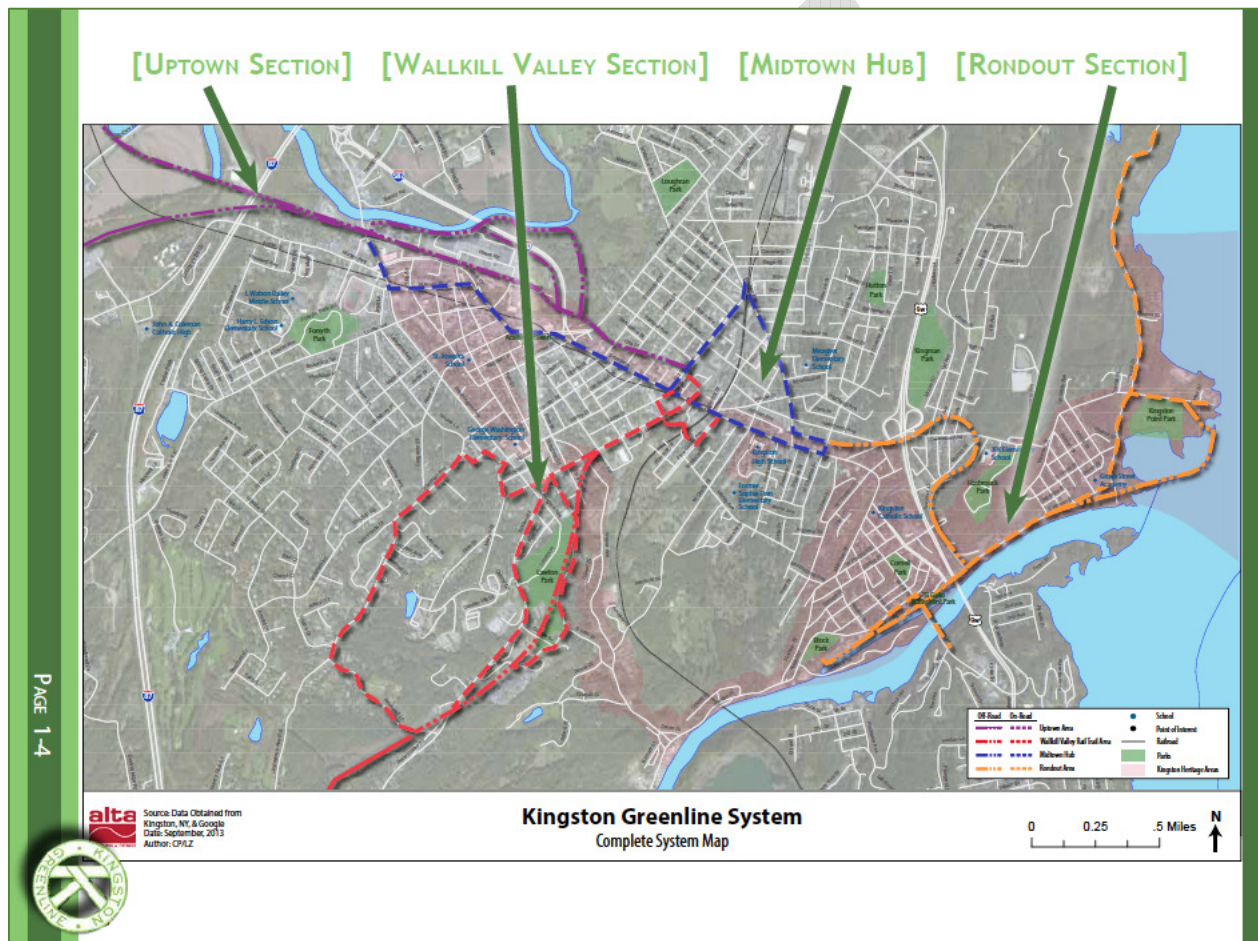
The City as whole should seek to attract new "green" jobs in industries involved in clean energy, energy efficiency and other emerging technologies that support sustainable living and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions - an industry cluster that will continue to develop as climate change progresses. Such industries should be welcome in all three core areas of the City as well as the Kingston Business Park. Also vital to all three cores and all neighborhoods of the City are the City's diverse and plentiful historic resources. No feature is as identifiable with the character of Kingston and preservation of these structures and districts is vital not only for the aesthetic and cultural enjoyment of residents and the education of new generations, but also as one of the most important industry clusters - tourism.

The areas surrounding these cores should contain stable neighborhoods of quality housing, mostly in one- and two-family residences. The densities of existing neighborhoods should be maintained and the proliferation of illegal conversions should be reversed. Residential neighborhoods are not and need not be monolithic, however. Housing choices for residents of all incomes should be provided throughout the City, and limited multifamily is appropriate in all areas, especially in obsolete former commercial and industrial buildings. Also, while retail commercial should be focused in the cores as opposed to along continuous auto-centric corridors, opportunities for occasional corner stores should not be precluded. These existing neighborhoods, as well as the core areas should take advantage of "missing teeth" (vacant lots or lots with vacant structures) as an opportunity for community gardens and urban agriculture.

**“The guiding principal of the plan for Kingston is to concentrate density and retail commercial uses in three core areas: Uptown centered at the Stockade District, Midtown centered at the Ulster Performing Arts Center, and Rondout centered at the foot of Broadway.”**



Joining neighborhoods to core areas should be a network of complete streets. The City should adopt a clear policy of improving the function of existing streets to accommodate pedestrians of all ages, cyclists, and the disabled at an equal or greater priority than vehicular traffic. Such streets should be the norm and provide access throughout the City's neighborhoods. The implementation of these complete streets should be prioritized in first linking the three existing core areas, but radiating out into existing neighborhoods as quickly as possible. Complementing this network of complete streets should be a network of off-street walking and cycling paths, taking advantage of defunct rail lines wherever possible. The Kingston Land Trust's Greenline Conceptual Plan provides an excellent starting point for implementing a transportation network that serves all Kingston residents.



Not only do complete streets and off-road trails provide transportation infrastructure, but they serve as a means of exercise and recreation. The City provides and should continue to provide a range of recreational facilities appropriate to their neighborhoods and serving a variety of interests.

Though from a regional standpoint it is preferable to concentrate density in Cities, there are areas of Kingston that are most appropriate to be preserved as open space, especially those that are environmentally constrained (See Environmental Constraints Map). This includes not only green space, but blue spaces of navigable waters, estuary and coastal areas. The southerly area of the City along both sides of Wilbur Avenue between Greenkill Avenue and Abeel Street should be preserved in its existing undeveloped character to the extent practical. It should be the overwhelming preference of

the City to prioritize reuse of existing buildings, redevelopment of brownfields and obsolete buildings, intensification or "building upwards" of existing core areas, over any new greenfield development.

Open spaces and natural resources should not be limited to outlying areas, however, there are valuable natural resources and habitats throughout the City, and efforts to preserve these natural resources are vital. They provide the City with biological, ecological, aesthetic and recreational value as well as opportunities for groundwater recharge and erosion control. The City should seek to identify and prioritize the preservation of important natural resources through acquisition, appropriate zoning and regulation, and partnering with land trusts and other not-for-profits.

Kingston is a Climate Smart Community. It recognizes the impact of sprawl, energy inefficiency and waste on global climate. While the problem is global, every solution to the problem must begin locally and the City supports and endorses the Kingston Climate Action Plan, which contains real strategies to make government and the City's development pattern more sustainable and energy efficient. Kingston further recognizes that Sea Level is rising and will continue to rise through the end of this century. The tidally influence shoreline of Kingston will likely see rises of between three and six feet drastically impacting life along the Hudson River and Rondout Creek. Areas along the shoreline need to acknowledge the hard fact that sea level rise and intensification of storms will result in areas of the City becoming vulnerable to flooding and storm surge. These areas must adapt to this reality.

This basic land use plan is reflected in the following "Plan:" chapters. This first chapter chiefly deals with goals, objectives and strategies relevant to land use recommendations for the entire city. Other subject-based chapters follow that deal with housing, open space resources, economic development, transportation and mobility, historic resources, and public facilities. These subject-based chapters are also applicable to the entire City. Following these chapters are three chapters that deal with the City's three principal core areas. Midtown is given additional detailed treatment as the area of the City with the most identified need for planning. The Rondout core was extended to include recommendations relevant to the Hudson River waterfront, including the approved Hudson Landing development.

The last element of this plan is a chapter on the future. This plan should continue to be a living document. The great people of Kingston, and its great agencies and institutions are continually striving to make their community a better place. Planning is a never-ending process and this document must be kept up-to-date in order to ensure that the Vision is achieved.

The title of this Plan - Kingston 2025 was intentionally named in order to prompt action should it ever become out of date. The future must include regular update of this land use plan and incorporation of new goals, objectives, and strategies as they are developed.

“Open spaces and natural resources should not be limited to outlying areas, however, there are valuable natural resources and habitats throughout the City, and efforts to preserve these natural resources are vital.”

## **Goal 1: Promote a Sustainable Citywide Land Use Policy;**

**Objective 1.1: Regulate a land use pattern that concentrates residential density and commercial activity in mixed-use cores, rather than separating uses and densities and orienting commercial activity along vehicular corridors;**

**Strategy 1.1.1: Concentrate residential density around three mixed-use cores of the City.** Highest densities should be clustered around the Uptown, Midtown and Rondout mixed-use business districts, with surrounding neighborhoods limited to urban density single- and two-family residences. As distance increases from the mixed-use cores, density should decrease to one-acre and lower in outlying areas such as the areas along Wilbur Avenue. The proposed Hudson Landing planned development mirrors this density arrangement around a proposed new fourth mixed-use core. Multifamily should not be completely eliminated from the City's urban neighborhoods, but existing supplies are adequate and new multifamily outside core areas should be the exception, not the rule.

**Strategy 1.1.2: Require affordable housing for any new or expanded residential building or development project.** Such affordable housing should be administered through the City and apply to any existing building or site containing more than six units of residential housing following approval. An affordability level of 80% of Area Median Income is suggested for one unit or 10% of units whichever is higher. This provision should apply to any residential site plan approval including new units, expansions, renovations, or application brought before the Planning Board in remedy of a violation. The existing requirements for 20% affordable housing in adaptive reuse projects under the mixed-use overlay district regulations should be reconsidered at 10%.

**Strategy 1.1.3: Require newly constructed multifamily units meet ADA standards and enhanced accessibility standards.** All new construction multifamily units should be required to meet ADA accessibility standards. This could include only allowing units on floors higher than the second story, where elevator access is provided, or limiting those units to efficiencies and one-bedroom units as an incentive for the provision of elevators. This standard would exceed the existing building code. Additionally, all new construction multifamily housing proposing more than six units should provide 10% of units or at least one unit that is accessible without steps and via entryways, internal corridors and doorways suitably wide to permit accessibility to those bound to wheelchairs (in excess of current ADA requirements). Such units should also consider accessibility to wheelchair bound people in the design of bathrooms and other living areas.

**Strategy 1.1.4: Consider adopting form-based codes and aesthetic requirements for homogenous areas of the City.** For certain neighborhoods with homogenous character and a uniform existing design, the City may wish to develop a basic building form and basic aesthetic guidelines along with a series of permitted uses for each story of the building.

The City could then allow any conforming application, for a new structure to be approved with no approval other than a Building Permit or Certificate of Use, so long as the use is a permitted district use. Areas of the City such as the Uptown, Midtown and Rondout core areas should remain subject to special design guidelines to maintain their historic urban character.

**Strategy 1.1.5: Allow mixed-uses in the C-2 Districts.** The C-2 zoning district that corresponds mostly with Uptown and the Broadway Corridor do not allow residential uses, despite the fact that a

large proportion of the district is not only traditional urban form mixed-use buildings, but that much of the area is comprised of single-family and two-family detached dwellings. Both areas are largely located within the "Mixed-Use Overlay District" but this district is intended to allow for adaptive reuse and has few regulations or requirements governing upper floor residential use or allowances for purely residential uses including single-family residential like those located along John Street and throughout the Uptown C-2 district.

**Strategy 1.1.6: Abandon Mixed-Use Overlay District in favor of City-wide standards for adaptive reuse and affordable housing.** This poorly named Mixed-Use Overlay District is actually a district that allows the adaptive reuse of former industrial and commercial buildings for mixed-use multifamily use within Uptown and Midtown. The concept is sound, but the requirements are nebulous and open to broad interpretation and the process is complicated and difficult to understand. For example standards requiring "sheltering elements" and "street trees" as "essential features of adaptive reuse site plans."

The affordability standards, which dominate the Mixed-Use District requirements, could be simplified and a standard set of rules regarding the provision of affordable housing for all multifamily residential applications in the City should be promulgated regardless of location.

The City should simplify the District Requirements by providing concrete standards, removing unnecessary standards, and streamlining the code. Additionally, the actual mapped districts could be eliminated in favor of clear applicability standards as to the size and/or age of existing buildings, the types of former uses, and the proximity to certain mapped streets. Clear density standards should be added and it should be clear as to what particular non-residential uses are permitted in adaptive reuse projects and these uses should allow a broad range of neighborhood scale retail, personal services, as well as live-work spaces (currently "artist lofts"). Provisions should also be made for permitting purely residential buildings or providing buildings with some ground floor residential frontage as long as the Planning Board finds that adjacent and nearby uses do not provide ground floor retail, and doing so would not change the retail character of the neighborhood.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Concentrating density in the established urban cores is a sustainable practice that should promote health and decrease energy usage. Allowing a mix of uses in these higher density areas will further reduce travel times and energy expenditure and promote walking. Form-based codes and aesthetic requirements should promote maintaining neighborhood and area character, while minimizing bureaucratic delay and unnecessary regulation. Promoting affordable housing and accessibility throughout the entire city should promote social justice and reduce undue concentrations of poverty in particular areas of the City.*

## **Objective 1.2: Promote sustainable practices and green technologies in any proposed redevelopment consistent with Climate Smart Communities Certification Program;**

**Strategy 1.2.1: Provide local incentives for the incorporation of solar panels.** Potential incentives could include a local short-term tax abatement that may encourage new building owners to install panels on existing structures.

**Strategy 1.2.2: Implement the recommendations of the Kingston Climate Action Plan.**

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The proposed recommendations are not anticipated to result in adverse impacts. The proposed recommendations are intended to result in a reduction in the City's carbon footprint, thereby positively impacting global climate change.*



**Objective 1.3: Promote urban agriculture as a sustainable practice as a part of local and regional food systems change, with a focus on Midtown;**

**Strategy 1.3.1: Inform the public to the benefits of Urban Agriculture.** As more communities focus on the importance of sustainability, the practice of urban agriculture, which strives to make food "local" through the cultivation of vacant land, turning roof tops and balconies into gardens and open space livestock grazing is rapidly increasing. The practice of urban agriculture can serve as both a climate change mitigation strategy, by reducing food miles, and adaptation, by enhancing food security and urban resilience. Midtown, as a core area of this plan, should be the focus of Kingston's urban agriculture strategy, which can: help reduce obesity rates, support access to fresh, healthy food, especially in low income areas; provide an opportunity for citizens to grow their own food and participate in the local food system; and support economic, social, health, and environmental benefits.

**Strategy 1.3.2: Incorporate urban agriculture into the new zoning code.** Broaden use districts to include small residential lots, commercial, mixed-use, manufacturing, and waterfront districts. Incorporate urban agriculture definitions into the zoning. Allow "Market Gardens" in the new zoning. Incorporate appropriate accessory structures and uses, parking and loading, screening, appearance, as well as related ordinances to include including composting, garbage (solid waste), weeds, municipal water, prescribed burning, and gardening in municipal parks.

**Strategy 1.3.3: Institute design review for urban agriculture projects.** Allow sketch plans and site drawings without a professional seal, which helps lower the transaction cost. Without clear guidance about layout requirements and options, these can be more difficult for a typical applicant to properly produce. A design pattern book is recommended.

**Strategy 1.3.4: Allow urban agriculture in City parks.** The Kingston Recreation Master Plan identifies Cornell Park as good candidate site for a community garden and some fruit trees. (As noted in Strategy 1.1.2, vacant sites in Midtown should also be evaluated for urban agricultural use.)

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Allowing the cultivation of food within neighborhoods will reduce the amount of energy expended in bringing food to market, will make fresh quality food more accessible to residents, especially those constrained by limited incomes, and result in improved health and social equity. As long as community gardens are well maintained and do not fall into disuse, no adverse environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of this recommendation.*



**Above:** An example of wayfinding signage from Philadelphia. The signage is uniform in form and size throughout the City, but different "Districts" are provided different icons and colors. A similar system could be employed throughout Kingston.

**Objective 1.4: Promote a city-wide aesthetic and culture that is vibrant, attracts visitors to the City, and makes Kingston a more effective center for government, commerce and culture in Ulster County;**

**Strategy 1.4.1: Create a cohesive design for public infrastructure and signage that celebrates the qualities of each of the City's primary neighborhoods.** The City should use and require uniform street signage, wayfinding signage, street furniture, decorative plantings, and kiosks unique to the City to promote local events and create a distinct sense of place [Funding may be available through Heritage Areas Program formerly known as Urban Cultural Parks]. Such design should differentiate the three main City neighborhoods of Uptown, Midtown and Rondout through color or iconography, but otherwise be of uniform size and shapes throughout the City. One potential overarching theme could identify the City as the gateway to the Catskills.

**Strategy 1.4.2: Review permitting procedure for outdoor events** including arts fairs, farmers markets, and street performance and remove disincentives such as exorbitant fees or unreasonable time restrictions.

**Strategy 1.4.3: Encourage/require that businesses stay open during evening hours.** The City should consider requiring evening business hours for uses that require special permits. Currently, most businesses in Uptown thrive off of local County offices and other supporting uses. Many small business establishments are closed at night decreasing commercial interest during the evening. Achieving a critical mass of retail, restaurant and service uses that remain open into the evening may help to increase patronage. The City should also consider ways to attract patronage to these businesses during evening hours, including actively programming local parks or working with local chambers and business groups to have "night-out" events where local businesses sponsor safe recreational events for children so that parents may enjoy the City's dining and entertainment options.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The proposed recommendations would make the City more navigable by pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, reducing travel times and unnecessary energy expenditure. This would bring more patronage to businesses and create jobs, as well as increase patronage to the areas that are open for evening business hours. No adverse environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of these recommendations.*

# Plan: Housing

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Throughout life, the typical person will spend more time at home than any other single location. This is especially true of children and older adults. Therefore, homes and neighborhoods inform life experiences perhaps more than any other locational factor. Because of this, most people have strong preferences about where they live.

There is a diversity in the type of residences people choose for themselves and their families, but often economic realities reduce the amount of options available, and often the realities imposed by aging or transitioning through various phases of life impose physical prerequisites on housing choices. It is important to understand the type of housing available in the City, and the preferences of the current population to insure that housing options can accommodate existing residents as they transition through life and confront economic challenges, and are available to accommodate new residents.

The City of Kingston has experienced slow, nominal growth over the last thirty years and the City remains below its population peak. Combined with increasing housing units over the last 10 years, it is not surprising to see an increase in vacancy rates over the last ten years. During that time, occupied housing units have become tilted toward rental occupancy. The City has a much higher proportion of renter occupied housing, than the larger County.

The Community Development Agency, has seen the greatest housing needs in the Midtown Area. The CDA has focused much of its rehabilitation and homeownership programs in this area, and has been seeking City infrastructure investments in this area as well. The CDA office has compiled significant data documenting the need for public safety, jobs, and general economic development efforts in the Midtown area. The Midtown Area has become increasingly dominated by communities of Hispanic origin, and programs addressing the area must be bilingual.



**Above:** Example of variety of existing housing stock in the City of Kingston, NY.

The following chapter applies to the City's neighborhoods in general with particular focus on housing. It is noted that the higher density and mixed-use cores of Uptown, Midtown and the Rondout are discussed elsewhere.

## **Goal 2: Promote maintenance and improvement of existing stable neighborhoods outside the "mixed-use cores;"**

### **Objective 2.1: Significantly reduce the number of illegal conversions of single- and two-family dwellings;**

**Strategy 2.1.1: Significantly increase the penalties for illegal conversion of one-, two-, and three family residential uses to multifamily.** Currently, illegal conversions can go for years before being discovered. Once discovered and a violation is issued, the court often allows the remedy of seeking a variance to allow the use. The City should increase the penalties for zoning violations involving illegal apartments and institute a code enforcement fee to cover the increased cost to the City of prosecuting illegal conversions. Along with a policy that all fees owed the City must be paid prior to appearing before the Planning or Zoning Board, this fee could establish a stream of income upon which the City can better enforce zoning laws for neighborhoods.

**Strategy 2.1.2: Expand the City's Rental Registration Program.** The City currently has a rental registration program, which requires landlords to register rental properties within the City with the Building Inspector. Such registration program should require the building owner to provide up-to-date contact information and/or designate a local agent responsible for repairs and maintenance. A floor plan should be provided designating partition of units, and the location of required fire safety devices.

The registration should be suspended upon the failure to remedy a violation within a given period of time. The program should be broadly advertised, and the rental of property without registration should be subject to a fine.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The enforcement of existing housing laws should result in more sanitary housing conditions and is not anticipated to result in adverse environmental impacts.*

### **Objective 2.2: Encourage improvement of existing residences;**

**Strategy 2.2.1: Provide grants or low-interest loans for home improvements.** Potential County, State or private loans (e.g., bank loans in connection with the Community Reinvestment Act) can be very effective when properly advertised and administered in helping homeowners to improve their appearance. Preference is typically given to projects that impact street-facing facades, like painting and porch repairs. Programs to improve the energy-efficiency of homes should also be considered, as they can lower the overall cost of operating the property.



**Strategy 2.2.2: Require stricter property maintenance laws for residential uses.**

The appearance of ill-maintained residential lots and structures, currently poses a deleterious influence on the community. The City should adopt a stricter property maintenance law for residential structures.

Issues to be controlled by the guidelines include - uniformity of wall cladding and roofing materials, colors and textures; appropriate and original sizing of wall openings (window and doors); location and screening of parking on the site for multi-unit structures; landscaping and maintenance of yards visible to the public right-of-way (with provisions that would allow for food gardens); acceptable location of fire escapes; location and screening of refuse containers and building mounted utilities including exterior cabling, meters and satellite dishes; maximum paving of front yards; maximum size of curb cuts; minimum requirements for street trees, sidewalks, front porches and the pedestrian realm. The enhanced property maintenance law may require approval by the Department of State.



**Above:** Examples of existing housing stock in the City of Kingston, NY.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The provision of funding for home improvements and stricter property maintenance laws should result in more sanitary housing conditions and is not anticipated to result in adverse environmental impacts.*

**Objective 2.3: Increase homeownership to be more consistent with Ulster County averages;**

**Strategy 2.3.1: Promote homeownership by low- and moderate-income households.** It is important that Kingston does not simply provide only rental housing as an affordable option, but that opportunities to own a home are made available to residents of all income levels. Possible methods for achieving this objective include:

- The use of real estate tax forgiveness for seniors and lower-income households facing foreclosure;
- Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) style technical assistance programs for home improvements;
- Mutual housing arrangements where a portion of rental payments is put aside for eventual acquisition of the unit;
- Market and promote “Kingston Living” focusing on lifestyle elements of recreation, historic setting, waterfront opportunities and proximity to the Catskills to area employment centers to attract young professionals to the City;
- One-stop-shop and workshops for information on housing support programs;

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The provision of programs encouraging homeownership among a range of income cohorts should result in greater social equity and greater investment and guardianship in City neighborhoods. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of this recommendation.*

**Objective 2.4: Maintain and promote traditional architectural form consistent with the existing neighborhoods, including provision of front porches, short setbacks, and traditional building scales;**

**Strategy 2.4.1: Develop form-based policies for infill development on vacant lots to ensure new houses compliment neighboring properties with respect to placement, mass and orientation to the street.**

- Adopt form-based code for infill housing on vacant lots.
- Ensure the height and scale of new houses is generally compatible with surrounding development.
- Develop design guidelines for infill housing.



**Above:** Examples of existing housing stock in the City of Kingston, NY.

**Objective 2.5: Promote social interaction through the provision of neighborhood gardens, community gardens, parks and other open spaces;**

**Strategy 2.5.1: Development of institutional supports for urban agriculture activities by community groups.**

- Develop of evaluation criteria and review of parcel suitability for Urban Agriculture (UA).
- Establish mechanisms to facilitate cooperation and partnerships between relevant city departments, food banks, and other community services to promote UA; fund and staff a formal municipal community garden program to manage UA initiatives throughout the city.
- Form an Urban Agriculture Committee of the CAC to review plans and policies and make recommendations on urban agricultural issues.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Allowing the cultivation of food within neighborhoods will reduce the amount of energy expended in bringing food to market, will make fresh quality food more accessible to residents, especially those constrained by limited incomes, and result in improved health and social equity. As long as community gardens are well maintained and do not fall into disuse, no adverse environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of this recommendation.*

# Plan: Open Space Resources

The following text borrowed from the “Draft Preliminary Review of Open Space and Natural Resources for the City of Kingston, NY”, prepared by the Kingston Conservation Advisory Council, serves well as an introduction to this Plan Chapter.

*Open Space is land that is not intensively developed for residential, commercial, industrial or institutional use. It serves many purposes, whether it is publicly or privately owned. It includes agricultural and forest land, undeveloped shorelines, undeveloped scenic lands, public parks and preserves. It also includes water bodies such as lakes and bays. What is defined as open space depends in part on its surroundings. A vacant lot, community garden or small marsh can be open space in a big city. A narrow corridor or pathway for walking or bicycling is open space even though it is surrounded by developed areas. Historic and archeological sites are often associated with significant open spaces and are a part of our common heritage.<sup>1</sup>*

*An open space preservation program considers water resources protection, preservation of wildlife habitat, the identification and retention of historic resources and the management of parks and recreation facilities and the management of community and urban forestry and agriculture. This comprehensive approach is reflected in the open space objectives:*

- *Preserve and enhance the natural and cultural features that form Kingston’s unique qualities.*
- *Promote a land use development pattern that is consistent with the carrying capacity of natural resources and the ability to provide services.*
- *Ensure the quality of Kingston’s water resources.*
- *Protect and promote urban agriculture, community and urban forests and forested land.*
- *Retain forested areas, stream corridors, wetlands and other open spaces to the maximum extent practical, so as to establish and preserve buffers between developed areas.*
- *Provide increased protection for environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, flood plains, steep slopes, ridges, wildlife habitat areas and corridors, and unique geological formations and features.*
- *Preserve the character of historical sites and structures.*
- *Protect, expand, connect and create active and passive recreational facilities and opportunities.*
- *Identify and protect scenic views as seen from roadsides, parks, waterfronts, and other areas frequented by the public.*
- *Preserve and enhance key entryways or gateways to Kingston.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Local Open Space Planning Guide (2004 reprinted 2007) page 3. NYSDEC and NYS DOS.

<sup>2</sup> Hauser, Emilie. Preliminary Review of Open Space and Natural Resources for the City of Kingston, NY. December 2013. Page 2 and 3. Kingston Conservation Advisory Council.



**Goal 3: Preserve constrained lands as open space, agriculture or very low-density residential clustered development as appropriate;**

**Objective 3.1: Promote open space preservation throughout the City, but especially in outlying areas;**

**Strategy 3.1.1: Consider lowering density for residential development of remaining outlying undeveloped or underdeveloped areas to 2-3 acres per lot.** Densities permitted by existing 2014 zoning in outlying rural areas of the City are approximately 3.5 units per acre. By comparison, the existing 2014 zoning requires farms, gardens and other agriculture have minimum required lot areas of 5 acres. Additionally, subdivision regulations should require that, where practical, residences be clustered and continuous tracts of open space be preserved.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The reduction in permitted densities in outlying area will result in a more sustainable development pattern, whereby the majority of new residences will be concentrated closer to core mixed-use areas and existing infrastructure and services. Doing so will reduce the amount of impervious surfaces associated with new road construction, the amount of energy expended and CO2 generated by private automobiles. Additionally, more rural remaining naturalized areas will be less subject to development pressure at lower densities and existing contiguous open space resources in outlying areas will be preserved. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of this recommendation.*

**Objective 3.2: Identify and protect scenic views as seen from roadsides, parks, waterfronts, and other areas frequented by the public.**

**Strategy 3.2.1: Support the City's Tree Commission's efforts to ensure the sustainable management of the City's trees.** Kingston is designated as a "Tree City USA." The City should actively pursue maintaining this designation by continuing to require the provision of street trees and by planting trees in parks and on public lands.



**Above:** View of the Kingston Lighthouse from Hasbrouck Park.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Planting of trees will help improve air quality, capture CO2, improve neighborhood character, aesthetics and mental health. This continuation of an existing policy is not anticipated to result in adverse environmental impacts.*

**Objective 3.3: Promote protection and conservation of environmentally constrained lands and important natural resources;**

**Strategy 3.3.1: Enact a Hillside Protection Zoning Provision.** Steep slope zoning regulations reduce runoff, soil loss, and erosion on sensitive slopes, by limiting the impacts of development on steep slopes and sensitive lands. The varied terrain in parts of Kingston, such as the different elevations along Wilbur Avenue, require revised standards for building on slopes. Construction on steep slopes greater than 15 percent and less than 25 percent should be minimized, and construction on slopes of 25 percent or greater should be avoided as much as possible.



**Strategy 3.3.2: Continue to promote narrow widths for rural roads in the City.** There is little need to build the City's outlying rural roads as full-32' wide or greater paved roads. The City should continue to maintain these roads at a maximum of twenty-four feet wide with soft shoulders to maintain the character of outlying areas, reduce stormwater runoff, reduce maintenance costs, reduce stormwater runoff, and consume less energy to construct and maintain.

**Strategy 3.3.3: Enact Surface Water Protection Regulations.** In order to protect water quality and various water-dependent habitats, the City should consider the creation of a buffer requirement around surface water resources including streams, wetlands and vernal pools. Currently, the NYS DEC requires a 100-foot buffer around NYSDEC-regulated wetlands but other resources do not require such protection. A 50- to 100- foot buffer should be considered with dense vegetation requirements, particularly if a proposed use has an increased likelihood of impacting water quality.

**Strategy 3.3.4: Develop and adopt a Natural Resources Inventory and Open Space Plan.** The City of Kingston Conservation Advisory Council has begun the process of inventorying sensitive natural features such as habitats, flood zones, surface waters, geology, agricultural lands, forests, soils, and ecologically sensitive areas. The City should look to further refine the NRI and develop an Open Space Plan that provides recommendations for priority areas for open space preservation through public purchase, purchase by institutional land trust, or through low-impact uses such as parks and low-intensity agriculture. Additionally, existing zoning should be reconsidered in light of the Natural Resources Inventory and the Open Space Plan and incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan by reference.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The protection and conservation of environmentally constrained lands by identifying important natural resources and implementing appropriate land use controls will result in enhanced protection of the environment. No adverse environmental impacts are likely to result. To the extent that environmental resources exist close to urbanized areas and to the extent buffering may be required in the future in order to protect these resources as identified in the Natural Resources Inventory, social impacts such as impacts to housing affordability and availability may result. The Open Space Plan will need to consider these types of impacts as well as economic impacts in developing appropriate specific land use controls. The land use controls suggested herein (steep slope, surface water resource protection and maximum cross-sections for rural roads, are likely to be more protective of the environment, and the benefit of these protections outweighs potential impacts to housing affordability and economic development, especially given that adequate economic development and housing opportunities exist in unconstrained areas closer to the City's mixed-use cores. A 24' cross-section for rural roads is believed to be adequate to support public safety and emergency access to remote areas.*



**Above** (top to bottom:) Plaza and gazebo along West Strand; Kingston Point Beach; and TR Gallo Waterfront Park.

# Plan: Economic Development

Broad demographic trends show the City has been hit by the recent recession (2007-2009) and has seen growth in unemployment, especially among construction-related and public administration jobs. The effect of these demographics is reflected in the increased residential vacancy rates in the City, as well as the closure of public schools, firehouses and the potential impending closure of Kingston Hospital.

Analysis of block group demographic data generally indicates a concentration of concerning demographic indicators in the Midtown area. Midtown generally exhibits higher densities, lower median incomes, higher unemployment, higher average household sizes, and lower homeownership than the City in general. The Midtown area also represents the most racially and ethnically diverse area of the City, which raises social equity concerns.

The need for economic development, especially in and around Midtown is pronounced. A number of plans and initiatives have been started to encourage economic development, especially in Midtown. These include:

- Mayor Shayne Gallo's BEAT initiative to transform Midtown to a center for Business, Education, Arts and Technology;
- The Kingston Greenline project to encourage non-motorized transportation and draw cyclists and recreational users to the City through on-road improvements, and off-road trails including several rail-trail projects;
- The East Strand Promenade Extension, improving pedestrian waterfront access and paving the way for expanded waterfront use;
- Kingston Point improvements including improved access to the lighthouse via the causeway;
- Complete Streets project in the "Midtown Arts District" to promote better non-motorized connectivity between Arts-based points of interest along Cornell Street including the Lace Mill, Shirt Factory and UPAC;
- The Hudson River Promenade, a one-mile trail along the Hudson River that will provide unparalleled continuous waterfront trails for regional cyclists and recreational users;
- A Broadway Corridor Improvement Plan in preparation in cooperation with UCTC;

While this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan will act as a central repository of policy recommendations primarily involved with economic development, it is noted that the strategies contained throughout the entire plan have been developed in the interest of providing quality jobs and business opportunities throughout the City, but particularly in Midtown and the other mixed-use nodes.



**Above:** View of the underutilized buildings along Broadway in Midtown.

## **Goal 4: Enhance employment opportunities and promote economic vitality in the City;**

### **Objective 4.1: Establish Kingston as a livable city where residents want to live and businesses want to locate.**

**Strategy 4.1.1: Support the establishment of Kingston as a Rail Trail hub for Ulster County's system of rail trails by creating linear parks and implementing Kingston Greenline Conceptual plans.** The City should work with Ulster County and surrounding communities to identify priority projects and seek funding through the regional CFA and NYSDOT Transportation Alternative Program to implement needed improvements.

**Strategy 4.1.2: Develop a public-private partnership for conserving parks, open space, and other amenities that enhance the public spaces of the city.** Through public-private partnerships, the City will be able to leverage its own resources with that of the private sector to enhance recreation and open space.

**Strategy 4.1.3: Promote awareness of the city's location on the NYS Thruway, on a major rail corridor, as a port on the Hudson River, near major airports in Albany, Newburgh, and NYC, and near to the Amtrak station in Rhinecliff.** The City's access to the regional transportation system allows residents to commute to nearby employment centers and its businesses the ease to get its products to market.

**Strategy 4.1.4: Take advantage of the proximity to the Hudson, Rondout, and Esopus waterways, Shawangunk and Catskill Mountains and other natural resources.** The City's proximity to these regional waterways, parks and natural resources provide a treasure trove to recreational opportunities for its residents, which enhance the overall quality of life in the community.

**Strategy 4.1.5: Advocate for high standards in education.** While the City does not exercise direct control over school curriculum, the City can provide resources to Kingston Schools and increase the educational content of recreational programs.

**Strategy 4.1.6: Enhance Kingston's reputation as a safe city.** The City should actively investigate and remediate areas and conditions that may give the impression of being unsafe.



**Above** (top to bottom): View of Delaware and Ulster rail line with potential to serve as future rail trail gateway to regional trail system; view of the Catskills from City Hall, and view of The Shirt Factory a mixed use artist loft and commercial space on Cornell Street. Kingston has all the elements for a socially and economically vibrant city where residents want to live and businesses want to locate. The strategies contained herein are intended to help the City realize that potential.



*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: These policies are not likely to have adverse environmental impacts. The conservation of linear parkland will increase recreational resources and marketing and promotion do not constitute actions under SEQR.*

#### **Objective 4.2: Reduce the cost of doing business**

**Strategy 4.2.1: Explore alternatives for addressing the Homestead/Non-Homestead Differential Tax Structure.** To encourage the purchase and renovation of vacant housing units by new residents, the City could explore offering tax incentives for a period of years to homesteaders who buy, renovate and reside in the City.

**Strategy 4.2.2: Explore alternatives for reducing the cost of energy through the use of photovoltaics, geo-exchange, and group purchasing.** The City, its residents and commercial businesses should all be encouraged to pursue incentives through a variety of NYSERDA programs, which provide incentives for energy retrofits and the use of renewable energy systems.

**Strategy 4.2.3: Explore opportunities for the City to serve as a public utility for fiber optic connectivity and geoexchange.** The City should seek funding to assess the economic benefits of establishing its own public utility to enhance fiber optic connectivity, while also taking measures to encourage local providers to enhance such services in the City.

**Strategy 4.2.4: Actively seeks grants and develop other resources that stimulate investment.** The City should develop a list of priority projects for funding, address feasibility issues and develop preliminary cost estimates, so that it is prepared to seek funding when the notice of availability of funding is announced through the CFA or other State and federal grant programs.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: These policies have the potential to result in economic and fiscal impacts to the city. Adverse environmental impacts are not likely to result.*

#### **Objective 4.3: Reduce risk and stimulate investment in the city**

**Strategy 4.3.1: Follow through on the development of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) and Implementation Plan for the Rondout Waterfront.** The existing implementation plan and LWRP are now more than 10 and 20 years old respectively. Additionally, these plans do not account for more recent investigation that includes consideration of global sea level rise. The City should revisit these plans in light of the revised recommendations of Planning for Rising Waters.

**Strategy 4.3.2: Continue to support the development of shovel-ready business and light industry parks to attract new industries and allow existing industries to expand within the City of Kingston.** The presence of shovel-ready sites in the City will enhance Kingston's competitive advantage and its ability to retain and attract businesses.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Updating and moving forward with the development of the Rondout in light of projections for sea level rise and increased storm severity will result in a more sustainable development pattern with fewer environmental impacts.*

**Objective 4.4: Increase population density in main street areas and neighborhood centers through zoning for mixed use.**



**Strategy 4.4.1: Provide incentives for the renovation of vacant upper story space for residential use through New York Main Street and other State and federal grants.** There are a variety of grant programs available to assist the City in offering grants to building owners to renovate vacant space for residential purposes. Doing so will increase the population density in its urban centers, which could help to strengthen the social and economic vitality of these areas.

**Strategy 4.4.2: Encourage mixed use developments on large undeveloped greyfield sites within the City in order to strengthen the fabric of neighborhood centers.** The City should assess whether its zoning is a deterrent to new mixed use investment.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: A principal recommendation of this plan is to concentrate future population density around existing mixed-use centers where existing infrastructure, utilities, and services exist, thereby reducing the need for new transportation infrastructure, reducing energy usage, decreasing CO2 emissions, encouraging walking and cycling and improving public health. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of this policy.*

**Objective 4.5: Attract new active users, especially green-technology users to Kingston Business Park and along existing commercial corridors such as Broadway, Cornell St, and Greenkill Ave.**

**Strategy 4.5.1: Explore opportunities for installing Fiber Optic (FIOS) infrastructure along corridors such as rail trail or main streets.** The creation of rail-trails along former railroad corridors affords the perfect opportunity to simultaneously extend fiber optic and other utilities into the City's mixed-use centers more cost effectively. The creation of the rail-trail system should explore such opportunities so that the City is prepared to take advantage of such opportunities in the future.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The proposed strategy is intended to result in greater high-speed internet resources within the City. To the extent that these resources are co-located with existing streets and trails, no adverse impacts are anticipated to result, although site specific SEQR would be required.*



**Above** (top to bottom): View of mixed use building in Uptown, view of mixed use building in Midtown; and view of mixed use building along West Strand. Throughout the City there are many multiple-story mixed-use buildings with vacant space above the first floor. The City can promote better utilization of these building through mixed use zoning that streamlines the development review process and the creation of business attraction and residential homesteading programs.

**Funding Opportunity: Energy Research and Development Authority- Flexible Technical Assistance**

**(Flex-Tech):** Program provides up to \$50 million statewide to eligible New York State commercial, industrial, and institutional end users with objective and customized studies and engineering analysis to help make informed energy decisions. Successful applicants will work with NYSERDA staff, their NYSERDA FlexTech Consultant, or chosen service provider, to develop a detailed and site specific scope of work. This scope of work will then be reviewed and approved by NYSERDA and NYSERDA cost-share will be set aside. Please contact NYSERDA for scope of work requirements.

**Eligible Applicants:**

Municipalities  
State Agencies  
Not-for profits  
Public and private Educational institutions  
Health Care or Agricultural facilities  
Commercial and Industrial Facilities

**Eligible study categories include:**

*Energy Feasibility Studies* — Studies and customized recommendations for the energy consuming systems at your facility that align with your business goals.  
*Master Planning* — Ongoing identification of energy opportunities for your business. Services include energy, carbon and sustainability master planning, long-term operational and management support, and RFP preparation.  
*Industrial Process Efficiency* — These studies focus on increasing productivity and improving energy performance. Use them to help your company define and reduce energy use per unit of production.  
*Data Centers* — Helps you assess energy efficiency and reduce energy and carbon impacts in your data center support systems. Includes items such as system upgrades or replacement, server virtualization and redundancy optimization.  
*Benchmarking* — Benchmarking and onsite systems and operational assessments recommending low-cost energy-efficiency improvements.  
*Retro-commissioning* — This systematic process helps determine how well building systems perform interactively to meet the operational needs of owners and occupants.  
*Combined Heat and Power* — Rely on these studies to investigate the feasibility of installing combined heat and power.  
*Peak-load Reduction & Load Management* — Develop comprehensive protocols that allow customers to respond to curtailment calls from the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) during periods of New York electrical system capacity constraints.

**Objective 4.6: Attract new regional employers;**

**Strategy 4.6.1: Seek money for brownfield cleanup in order to create shovel ready sites.**

The City should seek all available funding in order to clean up former contaminated lands including Millen Steel, Luke Oil, Island Dock, L&M, and the Brick Yard. The City should seek public-private partnerships, wherever possible to leverage private capital to improve the environment and increase City employment.

**Funding Opportunity: Empire State Development Grants:** Funding is available for capital-based economic development initiatives intended to create or retain jobs; prevent, reduce or eliminate unemployment and underemployment; and/or increase business activity in a community or region.

Up to \$ 150 million for Regional Council Capital Fund  
Up to \$ 20 million for Empire State Economic Development Fund  
Up to \$ 4 million for Urban and Community Development Program

**Eligible applicants:**

Municipalities / Regional Government Councils  
BID's  
Economic Development Agencies  
Businesses

**Eligible Activities**

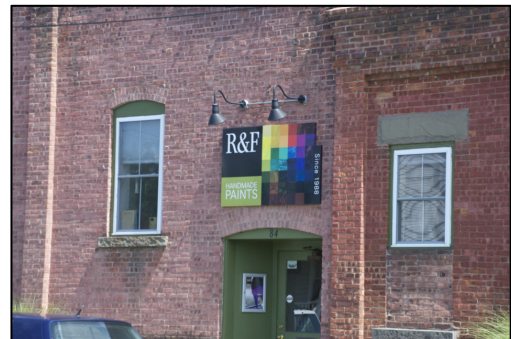
Capital expenditures that facilitate an employer's ability to create new jobs in New York State or to retain jobs that are otherwise in jeopardy.  
Financing infrastructure investments in order to attract new businesses and expand existing businesses, thereby fostering further investment. Infrastructure investments are capital expenditures for infrastructure including transportation, water and sewer, communication, and energy generation and distribution. Infrastructure also includes the construction of parking garages. Infrastructure Investment may be used to finance planning or feasibility studies relating to capital expenditures.  
Economic Growth Investments which foster economic growth through cultural activity, higher education activity, regional revolving loan and grant programs, other local or regional initiatives, agribusiness initiatives, **commercial revitalization activities in central business districts** or commercial strips, or other projects that may not have direct job creation goals. Economic growth investment projects that are able to provide direct job commitments will be viewed favorably.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion:* The environmental remediation of contaminated sites will result in improved environmental and public health conditions. However, any subsequent development projects over remediated land will be required to address potential impacts in site-specific SEQR reviews.

**Objective 4.7 Build upon existing strong industry clusters in the City, from Crafts and Art Production to Manufacturing to Micro-Brewing to Information Technology and Data Management to Green Industry;**

**Strategy 4.6.1: Inventory existing industry clusters and ensure Zoning allows such uses to continue and expand.** Certain non-nuisance industries have already situated within the City's mixed use areas and should be allowed to continue and expand.

**Strategy 4.6.2: Identify industries that would complement existing industry clusters and develop business attraction program for such industries.**



**Above:** R&F Handmade Paints in Midtown...one of many niche small-scale industries in the City.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion:* This policy is not likely to result in adverse environmental impacts.

**Objective 4.8: Promote small-business entrepreneurship, especially in the Arts and New Media Clusters;**

**Strategy 4.8.1: Establish a Comprehensive City Directory of Businesses.** Through the Economic Development Agency, the City could post a map-based business and non-profit directory for the City. This would allow a prospective visitor to the area to investigate in one location the wealth of galleries, shops, restaurants and attractions that the City has to offer. Using Google Maps, the visitor could plan a visit to the City interactively seeing where different attractions are located. The City could get started by adding well known attractions and key businesses, and allow any business within the City to submit a form to have their business listed. Both land and water based recreational opportunities should be included to promote and increase eco-tourism.

**Strategy 4.8.2: Continue to promote public-private communication and collaboration through an Arts Advisory Council.**

**Strategy 4.8.3: Continue to build solid working relationships with Neighborhood Business groups and a City-wide business alliance along with regional business organizations such as the Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce.**

**Strategy 4.8.4: Work closely with the Ulster County Office of Economic Development and the Ulster County Business Resource Center to share resources and reduce overlap.**

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: This policy is not likely to result in adverse environmental impacts. The policy could result in the public expenditure of funds, which could result in fiscal impacts, which would be considered against possible economic benefits to local businesses.*

**Objective 4.9: Promote development of human capital through job-training and adult education from advanced specialized education to English-language classes to build a more qualified local workforce and attract industry;**

**Strategy 4.9.1: Directly, or through partnerships, provide free focused training for English Language Mastery and Computer Literacy.** As necessary, the City could use CDBG funds in order to fund or contribute to funding such classes, either via volunteers, staff or partnerships with SUNY or local not-for-profits. As practical, the City should explore providing such classes through a satellite campus of Ulster Community College located in Midtown.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: This policy is not likely to result in adverse environmental impacts. The training of the existing local workforce is likely to increase social equity and result in positive economic impacts to City households.*

**Objective 4.10: Promote tourism based on historic resources and regional eco-tourism destinations as a new industry cluster;**

**Strategy 4.10.1: Promote Kingston as a Destination on a Route 87 Billboard.**

**Strategy 4.10.2: Develop and implement an Interpretive Plan for the City.** Such a Plan would pull together themes and establish needs for signage at the gateways, way finding throughout the city and provide interpretation at critical locations.

**Strategy 4.10.3: Develop and apply standards for “branding” the city in publications and online sites including taglines such as “historic is just our beginning.”** The City has a wealth of local artists that should be consulted in the development of the brand.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: These strategies are not likely to result in significant adverse environmental impacts. “Branding” and promotion is intended to attract tourism to the area, or to capture tourism that is already headed to the local region. This could increase vehicular traffic and increase the daytime population, but much of the traffic is already headed through or by the City to destinations north, east and west.*



**Objective 4.11: Work with State University of New York to provide education concentration related to a City niche, such as healthcare/nursing or hospitality.**

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The policy of working with SUNY to provide education in line with existing industry concentrations is not anticipated to result in adverse environmental impacts. The policy is likely to result in synergies between education and industry and maximize the employment of graduates and increase the practicality of curriculum.*

**Objective 4.12: Streamline the Development Review Process**

**Strategy 4.12.1: Designate local Type 2 SEQR list.** The State Environmental Quality Review Act allows local municipalities to designate their own Type 2 lists for uses that are not likely to result in environmental impacts. The City should avail itself of this ability especially for small commercial uses and changes of uses within existing structures.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: By rule the City may only designate actions as Type 2 if they so not result in significant adverse environmental impacts.*

**Strategy 4.12.2: Simplify and illustrate zoning and subdivision regulations.** To the extent possible the City's development regulations should be simplified in language and in regulations. Definitions should be modernized, and the code should be brought into compliance with recent court decisions. The regulations should be illustrated where doing so promotes greater understanding. Alternatively a Zoning Handbook could be written in parallel with the code, which graphically illustrates the text provisions in an easy to understand manner.

**Strategy 4.12.3: Establish a procedure for change of use.** Where a use is transitioning from one permitted use to another within an existing structure or building, the City should not require a site plan or a public hearing. The City should instead concentrate on promoting facade or landscaping upgrades to the site.

**Strategy 4.12.4: Simplify Code.** The complexity of the existing zoning code is an impediment to redevelopment. A much simpler code would reduce processing time of development applications thereby mitigating an impediment to economic development.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The simplification of code procedures and presentation will not result in adverse impacts where the actual land use controls are not compromised.*

**Objective 4.13: Work with partners to offer a comprehensive array of support services to businesses and investors who are committed to moving the City forward.**

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: This policy is not likely to result in adverse environmental impacts. The policy could result in the public expenditure of funds which could result in fiscal impacts, which would be considered against possible economic benefits to local businesses.*



**Objective 4.14: To insure that City investments go to sustainable projects, require that applicants seeking City funding, tax incentives or private/public partnerships fill out a Sustainable development checklist and achieve a minimum score.**

A Simpler Sustainable Development Checklist:

- ☐ use previously disturbed sites, protecting and restoring habitat
- ☐ repair and reuse existing buildings
- ☐ use products made from secondary or high recycled content
- ☐ use durable products and materials – choose materials that will last
- ☐ use sustainable materials that are from rapidly renewable resources
- ☐ use materials with low embodied energy
- ☐ use products not heavily processed or manufactured, which tend to require more energy
- ☐ buy locally produced building materials
- ☐ use salvaged building materials when possible – lumber, bricks
- ☐ eliminate or minimize use of pressure treated lumber
- ☐ maximize use of renewable sources of energy – solar, wind, geothermal
- ☐ maximize use of natural light
- ☐ seek to avoid using potable water for landscaping or irrigation
- ☐ use waterless or water saving fixtures
- ☐ use 'green' infrastructure to manage stormwater - rain gardens, grassy swales
- ☐ use innovative wastewater technologies
- ☐ provide storage, collection and delivery of recyclables to a recyclables processor

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: This policy is not likely to result in adverse environmental impacts. The policy would likely result in more sustainable projects as a result of public financing, reductions in energy consumption, reduction of CO2 emissions, reduction in water consumption, waste generation, and/or stormwater runoff.*

# Plan: Transportation and Mobility

## Introduction

A community's street network provides the framework upon which all land uses depend. The basic purpose of roads are to provide legal physical access to real property. However, the form of a network has implications beyond simple access and conveyance of people and property. During the period of rapid growth from the 1960s through the 1980s, road networks were designed principally with the aim of conveying motor vehicles through a network with the least amount of delay. This led to wide lanes of free flowing traffic, multiple turning lanes, signalized intersections and relatively high speeds.

This pattern is exemplified by the drastically oversized four lane Interstate 587 connecting Albany Avenue/Broadway with Interstate 87. It is also exemplified by the width and design of Broadway which eschews cyclists, on-street parking and pedestrian crossings for vehicular traffic flow, despite this being an active commercial and cultural corridor bisecting high-density neighborhoods and the geographic center of the city.

In the late 1980s and into the 1990s, planners began to consider the implications that this approach had. Wide roads designed principally for vehicles were not well suited to pedestrian and bicycle traffic, encouraged high speeds, contributed to high levels of carbon emissions, led to large volumes of stormwater runoff, and were costly to maintain. Kingston is now looking to calm traffic, rather than expand roads to accommodate it.

As the nation's largest generation enters retirement, there is a new appreciation for pedestrian and bicycle access and mass transit. Younger generations are seeking more walkable communities where residents do not depend on individually-owned automobiles for access to necessary goods and services. The need for a street system that respects pedestrians, bicyclists and those with special mobility needs is becoming more apparent.

In the past, consumers with cars have chosen to patronize commercial establishments with easy vehicular access and parking, such as malls and commercial strips. Critically, younger people – the Millennials, Generations X and Y – are looking to traditional downtowns where they can live, walk or bike to shopping and other activities. These populations, as well as aging Baby Boomers, are much less car-centric and more interested in the walkable neighborhoods.

### Complete the Streets

Now, in communities across the country, a movement is growing to “Complete the streets”. Cities and towns are asking their planners and engineers to build road networks that are safer, more livable, and welcoming to everyone.... to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This means that every transportation project will make the street network better and safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists – making your community a better place to live.

- National Complete Streets Coalition

The City of Kingston envisions a new multi-modal transportation paradigm that encourages healthy, active living, promotes transportation options and independent mobility, increases community safety and access to community destinations, businesses, and healthy food, reduces environmental impact, mitigates climate change, and supports greater social interaction and community identity.

This paradigm will provide safe and convenient travel along and across streets through a comprehensive, integrated transportation network for pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation riders, drivers, and people of all ages and abilities, including children, youth, families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities.

Key elements for achieving this vision will be: 1) improving the street system's ability to move people and goods safely and efficiently, 2) revitalizing the historic grid network that exists in Kingston by implementing Complete Streets solutions and policies, 3) developing a long-range non-motorized transportation plan, 4) improving the safety of the system for all users, and 5) promoting the increased use of public transport.

The City and its citizens and institutions have pursued a number of initiatives including the Complete Streets Advisory Council, the Kingston Greenline, the Kingston Connectivity Project, and Bike-Friendly Kingston in support of this new transportation paradigm.

The Ulster County Transportation Council has also provided significant planning support through a series of plans and studies including those listed in the Introduction to this Plan which are included herein by reference. In addition, the Council has launched a comprehensive study – “Building a Better Broadway”- which is being prepared in coordination with this Plan.

**Goal 5: Promote an effective and comprehensive transportation system that enhances safety, encourages and enables active mobility for all users of the streets including children, families, older adults, and people with disabilities, ensures accessibility, minimizes environmental impacts and encourages community connectivity;**



**Above** (top to bottom): View of Broadway from CSX Railroad overpass; view of Broadway looking west toward CSX Railroad overpass; and view from O'Neil Street looking toward Broadway. Each of these roadways is designed to primarily move high volumes of traffic, yet the wide width of each affords an opportunity to redesign these roadways with “complete street” design elements. Doing so will enhance the bicyclist and pedestrian experience and safety and result in a more inviting environment for people to live and visit.

**Objective 5.1: Improve the street system's ability to achieve the dual goals of moving people and goods safely and efficiently while maximizing the value of streets as public spaces;**

**Strategy 5.1.1: Promote and Implement Improvements as recommended by Ulster County.**

The City supports the County's plans for improvement to several key corridors within the City as discussed in previous studies including: Washington Avenue Corridor Study, Ulster County Non-motorized Transportation Plan, Uptown Stockade Area Transportation Plan, I-587 Intersection Study, City of Kingston/Town of Ulster Quiet Zone and Pedestrian Safety and Mobility Analysis, and Route 32/Fair St Intersection Alternatives Analysis.

**Strategy 5.1.2: Leverage new I-587, Broadway and Albany Avenue Roundabout as a model gateway to the City.** The City should leverage this new roundabout as a gateway to Kingston, by ensuring the design of the center Island is adequately landscaped and/or adorned with an appropriate monument to reflect the City's character. This design can then become the model for gateway designs at other key entrances to the City. (See also: UCTC - City of Kingston - I-587 at Albany Avenue/Broadway Intersection Study).

**Strategy 5.1.3: Consider intersection improvements to reduce automobile congestion, including single-lane traffic roundabouts or other treatments, while preserving non-motorized mobility.**

**Strategy 5.1.4: Create and maintain roadway efficiency by reducing congestion without compromising non-motorized mobility.**

**Strategy 5.1.5: Employ "traffic calming" techniques to reduce speeding and neighborhood cut-throughs.**

**Strategy 5.1.6: Reduce carbon emissions by reducing vehicle trips (especially single-occupancy), miles traveled and idle times.**

**Strategy 5.1.7: Expand and capitalize on the city's compact development and classic grid system by encouraging further transit-oriented development and non-motorized transportation modes.**

**Strategy 5.1.8: Promote "green streets" designs to reduce stormwater runoff, combat air pollution, reduce area temperatures and save money on maintenance and repair.**

**Strategy 5.1.9: Encourage human-scale infill development to present a continuous façade along commercial corridors throughout the city, with purposeful placement of public squares or marketplaces to add texture and diversity to the streetscape.**

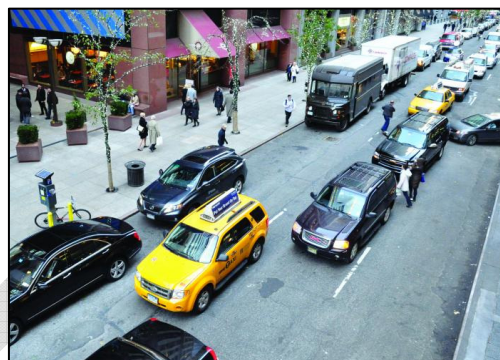
**Strategy 5.1.10: Establish consistent gateway treatments throughout the City's primary entry-points, including ornamental lighting, seasonal banners, tree plantings and landscaped medians.**

**Strategy 5.1.11: On principal arterials (Broadway, Albany Ave, I-587, etc), consider traffic calming techniques that preserve level of service (LOS) while promoting pedestrian/bike safety and activating public spaces and commercial areas.**



**Strategy 5.1.12: On minor arterials (Washington Ave, Foxhall, etc), utilize treatments including medians, pedestrian havens, limitation of curb cuts, limited/alternate side parking, sidewalks and bike lanes to increase safety and promote visual appeal while maintaining vehicle mobility.**

**Strategy 5.1.13: Maintain roadway efficiency with balanced roadway regulations.** Assure that the major arterials serving Kingston work at their maximum capacity, without compromising pedestrian safety. Interstate 587, Route 32 and Route 9W function as arterial highways. However other major arterials including Broadway, but to a lesser extent, Albany Avenue and Washington Avenue function poorly and consideration should be given to redesigning these roads as partial boulevards, or of implementing a "road-diet" for these streets taking them from four lanes to three with a separated two-way cyclist route (consistent with the Kingston Greenline Conceptual Plan). Where wide enough, medians should be introduced. Where now too narrow, setbacks should be required that may later allow this possibility. (This would require a detailed survey.) The City should adopt guidelines that limit the number of non-residential curb cuts within certain distances, promote consolidated curb cuts for adjoining properties, and promote side road exits for businesses. Additionally, with certain improvements, it may be possible to develop angled head in or out parking along stretches of Broadway.



**Above:** Example of complete street and road diet concepts. NYCDOT (from [www.spur.org](http://www.spur.org))

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion:* The proposed policies if enacted could result in a significant transformation of the City's transportation infrastructure. These implementations could result in significant adverse impacts and thus should be the subject of site-specific SEQR. The policies themselves are intended to result in significant environmental improvements including the decreased use of private automobiles and decreased traffic congestion resulting in improved air quality, decreased fossil fuel consumption and decreased production of greenhouse gases. Policies regarding balanced roadway regulations should result in increase pedestrianism and cycling resulting in significant improvements to public health and safety. Green infrastructure measures should result in decrease stormwater runoff, increased aquifer recharge, and decreased erosion, siltation and contamination of receiving waters. Policies regarding capital improvements may result in fiscal impacts that must be weighed against benefits to public safety and health as well as global environmental benefits.

**Objective 5.2: Transform all city streets into "Complete Streets" inclusive of pedestrians, cyclists and on-street parking, prioritizing key connections, such as Safe Routes to Schools, access from neighborhoods to commercial areas, and linking together existing and future multi-use trails and parks/recreation facilities;**

**Strategy 5.2.1: Develop new policies and tools to promote implementation of Complete Streets standards, in partnership with the Complete Streets Advisory Council.**



- Include infrastructure that promotes a safe means of travel for all users along the right of way, such as sidewalks, shared use paths, bicycle lanes, and paved shoulders.
- Include infrastructure that facilitates safe crossing of the right of way, such as accessible curb ramps, crosswalks, refuge islands, and pedestrian signals; such infrastructure must meet the needs of people with different types of disabilities and people of different ages.
- Ensure that sidewalks, crosswalks, public transportation stops and facilities, and other aspects of the transportation right of way are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and meet the needs of people with different types of disabilities, including mobility impairments, vision impairments, hearing impairments, and others. Ensure that the ADA Transition Plan includes a prioritization method for enhancements and revise if necessary.
- Prioritize incorporation of street design features and techniques that promote safe and comfortable travel by pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation riders, such as traffic calming circles, additional traffic calming mechanisms, narrow vehicle lanes, raised medians, dedicated transit lanes, transit priority signalization, transit bulb outs, road diets, high street connectivity, and physical buffers and separations between vehicular traffic and other users.
- Provide pedestrian-oriented signs, pedestrian-scale lighting, benches and other street furniture, bicycle parking facilities, and comfortable and attractive public transportation stops and facilities.
- Encourage street trees, landscaping, and planting strips, including native plants where possible, in order to buffer traffic noise and protect and shade pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Reduce surface water runoff by reducing the amount of impervious surfaces on the streets.
- Develop a pedestrian crossings policy to create a transparent decision-making policy, including matters such as where to place crosswalks and when to use enhanced crossing treatments.
- Develop policies to improve the safety of crossings and travel in the vicinity of schools and parks.
- Develop a new sidewalk code and program that will provide standards and guidelines for sidewalks throughout the city that will specifically address the problem presented by the current sidewalk code where homeowners are responsible for maintenance of aging sidewalks, but it is not consistently enforced.
- Consider developing a transportation demand management/commuter benefits ordinance to encourage residents and employees to walk, bicycle, use public transportation, or carpool.
- Develop a checklist for Kingston's development and redevelopment projects, to ensure the inclusion of infrastructure providing for safe travel for all users and enhance project outcomes and community impact.

- Develop and formally adopt local design standards for Complete Streets that address travel along roadways, crossings, and universal accessibility and that provide a high degree of user satisfaction for non-motorized users.
- Develop policies and strategies to preserve the city's historic bluestone sidewalks where appropriate and incorporate into Complete Streets guidelines
- Policies and strategies to preserve the city's historic bluestone sidewalks should be developed and incorporated into Complete Streets guidelines so as to promote implementation of the recommendations of the recently completed Kingston Bluestone Sidewalk Survey with regards to rehabilitating, restoring and preserving bluestone sidewalks and resources in Kingston.

**Strategy 5.2.2: Ensure that design standards are incorporated into all City, County, State and Federal projects involving streets/roadways within the City, at all stages of planning, design, approval, construction, and maintenance.**

**Strategy 5.2.3: Modify local funding criteria to ensure that existing and future transportation funding is available for Complete Streets projects/improvements.**

**Strategy 5.2.4: Identify additional funding streams and implementation strategies to retrofit existing streets to include Complete Streets infrastructure.** The City could pursue funding through the NYSDOT Safe Routes to Schools and Transportation Alternatives Program to make complete street improvements. For roads that are designated State or County Highways, the City should ensure that its desire for complete street improvements is recognized so that program funding can be included for such improvements in the NYSDOT Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

**Strategy 5.2.5: Consider conversion of I-587 to a State Highway of reduced scale.** In addition to design of the intersection itself, the I-587 Intersection Study considered the possibility of converting I-587 to a state highway and providing intersections from it with an extended Uptown



**Above** (top to bottom): Example of gateway to dedicated rail trail, which is a multi-purpose trail; example of an on-street painted bike path and an off-street combination sidewalk/bike path.

**Implement the recommendations of the Kingston Greenline Conceptual Plan to convert abandoned railroad beds to multi-use trails providing off-road pedestrian and cyclist routes throughout the City.”**

street system (through a redesigned neotraditional Kingston Plaza). The plan would expand and intensify Uptown and the Kingston Plaza area and create opportunities for mixed use development. The proposition of redesigning Kingston Plaza to a mixed-use neotraditional type retail center with direct bridge access to I-587, is an interesting, expensive and difficult proposition to implement, but should be given serious consideration, should the Kingston Plaza wish to reconfigure in such an arrangement. Still, the underlying concept of converting I-587 to a State Highway and putting the thoroughfare on a "road diet" by introducing a landscaped median and reducing the highway to two lanes or reducing lane widths while maintaining four lanes, could improve the aesthetics of this City gateway. While a bridge over the Esopus would be costly, it potentially could be funded privately in order to provide much better access from Kingston Plaza to the regional road network. (See also: UCTC City of Kingston - I-587 at Albany Avenue/Broadway Intersection Study)

**Strategy 5.2.8: Implement the recommendations of the Kingston Greenline Conceptual Plan to convert abandoned railroad beds to multi-use trails providing off-road pedestrian and cyclist routes throughout the City.** The City is crisscrossed with a number of now defunct rail lines. Wherever possible, the City should seek funding to convert these rights-of-way to multi-use trails providing cycling, skating and pedestrian facilities for both non-motorized off-street travel as well as recreation. The Kingston Greenline Conceptual Plan lays the groundwork for this off-road network with linkages through the conversion of existing vehicular streets to complete streets. Not only would this system provide an alternative pedestrian and cycle infrastructure throughout the City, but if extended out of the City into neighboring communities, routes can funnel potential new business patrons into the City and serve as an eco-tourism attraction.

It is recommended that implementation prioritize streets identified as part of the Kingston Greenline, including the Midtown hub, East Strand/North Street, and on-street connections from Midtown to the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail.

**Strategy 5.2.9: Employ "traffic-calming" techniques to reduce speeding and neighborhood cut-thrus** (as well as to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety). Colored/striated crosswalks should be clearly marked on all key pedestrian crossings throughout Kingston, starting in Midtown, Uptown, Rondout and at schools. Other permanent measures (such as chicanes, chokers, raised crosswalks, speed humps and speed tables) should be pursued, but always with consideration of the effects of these devices on the overall traffic pattern, driver safety, and the ability of emergency vehicles and trucks to navigate streets. As a general rule, temporary measures (such as improved striping to narrow lane widths and / or provide bike lanes) should be employed as a test before permanent measures are undertaken.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The proposed policies if enacted could result in a significant transformation of the City's transportation infrastructure. These implementations could result in significant adverse impacts and thus should be the subject of site-specific SEQR. The policies themselves are intended to result in significant environmental improvements including the decreased use of private automobiles and decreased traffic congestion resulting in improved air quality, decreased fossil fuel consumption and decreased production of greenhouse gasses. Policies regarding complete streets and traffic calming should result in increase pedestrianism and cycling resulting in significant improvements to public health and safety. Policies regarding the Interstate 587 road diet should result in decreased stormwater runoff from decrease in impervious surfaces, but a site-specific SEQR review will be required, especially in light of the adjacent Esopus Creek and freshwater wetlands. Policies*

regarding capital improvements may result in fiscal impacts that must be weighed against benefits to public safety and health as well as global environmental benefits.

**Objective 5.3: Develop and implement a long-range plan for a comprehensive and effective active transportation network for residents and visitors.**

**Strategy 5.3.1:** Prioritize efforts to provide non-motorized bicycle and pedestrian connections between housing, jobs, services, educational facilities and transit locations utilizing existing rail beds and other public lands/ROWs.

**Strategy 5.3.2:** Identify physical improvements that would make bicycle and pedestrian travel safer and more convenient along current major bicycling and walking routes and the proposed future network, prioritizing routes to and from parks and schools.

**Strategy 5.3.3:** Identify safety/accessibility improvements to pedestrian and bicycle routes used to access public transportation stops; collaborate with Kingston Citibus and UCAT to relocate stops where advisable.

**Strategy 5.3.4:** Identify safety challenges for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other users through methods such as walkability/bikeability audits; analyze data; and develop solutions to safety issues.

**Strategy 5.3.5:** Prioritize modifications to the identified locations and identify funding streams and implementation strategies, including which features can be constructed as part of routine street projects.

**Strategy 5.3.6:** Develop programs to encourage bicycle use, such as enacting indoor bicycle parking policies to encourage bicycle commuting, or testing innovative bicycle facility design.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The proposed policies if enacted could result in a significant transformation of the City's transportation infrastructure. These implementations could result in significant adverse impacts and thus should be the subject of site-specific SEQR. The policies themselves are intended to result in significant environmental improvements including the decreased use of private automobiles and decreased traffic congestion resulting in improved air quality, decreased fossil fuel consumption and decreased production of greenhouse gasses. Policies regarding complete streets and traffic calming should result in increase pedestrianism and cycling resulting in significant improvements to public health and safety. Policies regarding expanded public transportation and facilities development may result in fiscal impacts that must be weighed against benefits to public safety and health as well as global environmental benefits.*

**Objective 5.4: Improve the actual and perceived safety of roadways, sidewalks, and paths/trails within the City for all users.**

**Strategy 5.4.1: Beautify intersections at major City Gateways.** The City should consider planting dense colorful flowers beds and/or other decorative landscape treatments at its principal gateways. Such plantings would have to be maintained by the City or a partner agency/institution but could help to improve the identity of the community, and the City could seek business sponsorship in exchange for discrete signage. Gateways could be made to reflect the unique nature of the City's three neighborhoods, for example providing a maritime appearance with tall grasses and cordage gateways at the Rondout; providing very formal gardens at gateways at Uptown; and modern sculpture at gateways near Midtown.



**Strategy 5.4.2:** Collaborate with the Kingston City School District, senior centers, advocacy groups, and public safety departments to provide community education about safe travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation riders, and others.

**Strategy 5.4.3:** Use crime prevention through environmental design strategies to increase safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other users.

**Strategy 5.4.4:** Encourage public safety departments to engage in additional enforcement actions in strategic locations through Community Oriented Policing strategies such as foot/bicycle patrols and neighborhood outreach.

**Strategy 5.4.5:** Support the Implementation of the recommendations of Ulster County Transportation Council's City Of Kingston / Town Of Ulster Quiet Zone And Pedestrian Safety And Mobility Analysis: 2006. The study assessed the feasibility and costs of implementing a Quiet Zone and performed a pedestrian safety and mobility analysis for the City of Kingston's six grade crossings.

**“The City should consider planting dense colorful flowers beds and/or other decorative landscape treatments at its principal gateways.”**

- Kingston Comprehensive Plan

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The proposed policies are not anticipated to result in significant adverse impacts. The policies are intended to result in increase pedestrian and cyclist safety resulting in significant improvements to public health and safety.*

**Objective 5.5: Promote increased use of public transit by improving efficiency, accessibility and convenience.**

**Strategy 5.5.1:** Partner with UCTC & UCAT to enhance and expand public transportation services and infrastructure throughout Kingston and the surrounding region. The City should consider providing expanded bus service to train stations in Rhinecliff and Poughkeepsie and other destinations in partnership with Ulster County. Bus service to surrounding community points of interest should be enhance and centered around a transit hub in proximity to the SUNY Ulster satellite campus that can serve the dual purpose of opening access to Ulster County for City residents, and of providing affordable transportation for residents in surrounding communities to access higher education. Coupled with Citibus service, this would enhance access to County Offices and cultural uses in all three mixed-use cores (Uptown, Midtown and Rondout) to surrounding communities.

**Strategy 5.5.2:** Promote the enhancement of a local bus/paratransit system that increases personal mobility and travel choices, conserves energy resources, preserves air quality, and fosters economic growth.

**Strategy 5.5.3:** Work jointly with UCTC & UCAT to provide destinations and activities that can be reached by public transportation and are of interest to public transportation dependent populations, including youth, older adults, and people with disabilities.

**Strategy 5.5.4:** Incorporate infrastructure to assist users in employing multiple means of transportation in a single trip in order to increase transportation access and flexibility; examples



include, but are not limited to, provisions for bicycle access on public transportation, secure bicycle racks at transit stops, access via public transportation to trails and recreational locations, and so on.

**Strategy 5.5.5: Ensure that public transportation facilities and vehicles are fully accessible to people with disabilities.**

**Strategy 5.5.6: Partner with UCAT and UCTC to implement recommendations from the 2010 Ulster County Transit System Coordination & Development Plan and to collect data and establish performance standards.**

**Strategy 5.5.7: Promote trolley service along waterfront and to City points of interest.** Trolley Service should be provided from T.R. Gallo Park to the former Dayliner Dock at Kingston Point. Future extensions may include service to Island Dock, particularly if a maritime use such as a Hudson River aquarium is located there, as well as up along the proposed Hudson Landing Waterfront Promenade to the planned Hudson Landing community, and through to Hasbrouck Park with the potential for future connections from Hasbrouck Park to the rest of the city.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: These policies are intended to result in significant environmental improvements including the decreased use of private automobiles and decreased traffic congestion resulting in improved air quality, decreased fossil fuel consumption and decreased production of greenhouse gases. Policies regarding expanded public transportation and facilities development may result in fiscal impacts that must be weighed against benefits to public safety and health as well as global environmental benefits.*

# Plan: Historic Resources

During the public outreach phase of Kingston 2025, it became clear that the overwhelming majority of Kingston residents and stakeholders saw Kingston's historic resources as one of its greatest assets. From providing educational opportunities, to establishing neighborhood character, to drawing tourism, the City's historic resources and their preservation drew the most consistent interest.

Kingston is unique in the richness of its history. Its history as one of three original Dutch settlements in the United States, is on display throughout the Stockade District and the Old Dutch Church. Its burning at the hands of the British during the Revolutionary War is remembered and re-enacted each odd-numbered year. The Bluestone that once traveled down the Esopus from the Catskills to market in New York City lines its sidewalks. The remnants of its brick making industry is evident along the Hudson River waterfront. The maritime history of the Rondout survived Urban Renewal from the Kingston Point Lighthouse and Ferry Landing to the decaying drydocks at Island Dock. The bones of Kingston's textile industry is now the foundation for a burgeoning artist community. History is evident throughout the City and the success of its land use policies depends on an appreciation of that history.



**Above:** National Register of Historic Places *Senate House* circa, 1676. The house was built by Wessel Ten Broeck and briefly served as the meetinghouse for the New York State Senate beginning on September 9, 1777.

## **Goal 6: Promote further preservation of City historic and architectural resources and leverage them for further economic development;**

### **Objective 6.1: Continue protection of existing historic assets through recognition**

**6.1.1: Map existing historic resources and make available to the public.** Working with the local historian, Landmarks Commission, Heritage Area Commission and Planning Department, a map of Historic Resources within the City of Kingston should be commissioned and distributed in local places of assembly, the Kingston library and popular shops and restaurants and area hotels. Some mapping and a significant amount of content has already been prepared and made available through the Kingston website and at the visitor center. Therefore the task will be to refine and generate interest rather than to fully inform.

**Strategy 6.1.2: Continue the local historic plaque program through the Landmarks Commission to recognize renovated or well-maintained historic buildings.** Encourage local landowners with Landmarks to provide plaques in front of their buildings including the history and/or original pictures of a site.

**Strategy 6.1.3: Develop a visible “Kingston Heritage Trail” network.** This should consist of assigning a symbol for each Historic District (e.g. original Courthouse or Stockade Map for Stockade District; boat for Rondout) hanging banners from streetlights posts identifying the district. This would make people aware that they are in a special area of Kingston (see also recommendation 1.3.1).

**Strategy 6.1.4: Place significantly sized strategy markers or signage at the entrances to the Stockade and Rondout Districts** to make people aware that they are entering historically important section of the City.

**Strategy 6.1.5: Design a walking trail through Historic Districts.** The Friends of Historic Kingston has already designed walking tours for the Stockade, Rondout and Chestnut Street Districts. The City should cooperate with the FOHK and other historic protection advocacy groups as well as the Heritage Area Commission, Landmarks Commission to place small way-finding markers similar to hiking trail blazes at intervals along the trail. Markers could have initials KHT (Kingston Heritage Trail) along with the symbol for and name of each district.

**Strategy 6.1.6: Develop phone apps with information about the landmarks in a district so that people are both informed and entertained.**

**Strategy 6.1.7: Ensure that the Greenline provides entryways into the City's Historic Districts.** This may provide an opportunity to market portions of the Greenline as the “Kingston Heritage Trail” –400 Years of History At Your Feet. This effort should seek funding assistance by the Greenway Conservancy.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Creating interest in the “historical” aspect of the city will increase the tourism and make it a place of interest for those visiting New York State. Significant adverse environmental impacts are not anticipated as a result of these policies.*

**Objective 6.2: Simplify the regulatory programs and protections to ease processing of development approvals involving Historic resources;**

**Strategy 6.2.1: Develop procedures to combine, coordinate and/or eliminate review functions by multiple agencies.** Preservation of valuable historic resources must be ensured while expediting the reviews required by zoning and related laws.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Significant adverse environmental impacts are not anticipated as a result of this policy. Preservation of historic resources is likely to be enhanced where the protections are not compromised, but the process is simplified, thereby encouraging private investment in historic structures.*



**Above** (top to bottom): View of West Strand looking toward Broadway in the Rondout District; and view from Clinton Street looking away from the Senate House. Kingston is a walkable City with many rich historic resources.



**Objective 6.3: Actively seek preservation and maintenance of historic resources through public-private partnerships, including seeking State Funding for rehabilitation;**

**Strategy 6.3.1: Allow a zoning incentive for adaptive reuse of landmark buildings, should their current use prove untenable.** This density incentive would complement the federal financial incentive provided under the National Register Tax Act for buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The density bonus should apply only to the yield possible in the existing buildings, and not to new construction; i.e., it should not be employed as a circumvention of the underlying density, so much as a way to not render landmarks obsolete.



**Above:** View of the corner of Wall Street and North Front Street in Uptown Kingston.

**Strategy 6.3.2: Task Landmarks Commission with Assistance to local Landmark Owners.** Encourage a close working relationship between the Landmarks Commission, the local historian and the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for input on Local Landmarks and Landmark Districts and available funding for improvements of structures. The Landmark Commission should work to inform Landmark Owners or owners of Landmark-eligible structures of funding opportunities and other financial preservation incentives available through the State or Federal Government and not-for profit organizations. Assistance with grant applications should be a responsibility of the Landmarks Commission and members should be required to devote a certain amount of their meeting time to owner assistance in addition to review of applications.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Significant adverse environmental impacts are not anticipated as a result of this policy. A reasonable density increase is not likely to significantly impact area population density. Providing greater incentive for preservation of existing structures should result in greater private investment in historic resources. Guidance from the Landmark Commission should assist those seeking to rehabilitate and preserve the City's historic structures.*

# Plan: Public Facilities

The City contains an impressive collection of parks providing neighborhoods with local recreational needs. In the face of added maintenance costs, the City has looked to consolidate programming at several central locations. Previous planning studies recommend a new neighborhood park in the Stockade District, as well as significant improvements to Kingston Point Park. The Hudson Landing Promenade will offer a new significant regional recreational amenity that may serve to draw tourists to the City. Additionally, public outreach performed for the Comprehensive Plan indicated a demand for public park facilities in Midtown.

The City has a partially combined sanitary and storm sewer. The sewer is currently beyond its existing permitted capacity due to infiltration during storm events, and there are existing issues with regard to overflows during severe storms. The City is continuing to work towards remedying this, including retention of effluent during storm events, but any significant increase in housing density would likely tax the system further.

The Army Corps of Engineers has decertified the levees along the Esopus Creek, increasing the risk of damage during extreme storm events. The suitability of lands along the Esopus creek to support future development is limited. Additionally, the City currently experiences flooding along Main Street near Emerson Street, along Hurley Avenue, along Tannery Brook at Amy Court, and along the Strand. Future development in these areas must consider these physical constraints.

**Goal 7: Be proactive rather than reactive in improving public infrastructure including City streets, water and wastewater infrastructure, as well as enhanced park facilities;**

**Objective 7.1: Improve the operation of the wastewater treatment system and safeguard the infrastructure from future surge and sea level rise;**

**Strategy 7.1.1: Develop a plan to mitigate both near- and long-term risk to the wastewater treatment facility.** This plan should consider the life cycle of plant components, the value of the property for other uses, and innovative approaches (e.g., distributed systems and shared municipal services) that may effectively meet the wastewater treatment needs for the City and surrounding communities over the long term. The Plan should address the issues arising from the partial interconnection of the storm and sanitary sewer systems that lead to the inability to properly treat higher volumes during large storm events (combined sewer overflows). The treatment plant location within the current 100-year flood zone and the implication of increasing sea level elevation must be considered as well.



**Above:** City Hall, circa 1872 is a fine example of Victorian Architecture. At the time the building was constructed, Kingston was an important economic center during the height of the canal and steamboat era of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. This recently restored building is home to city government and is an important civic anchor on Broadway.



**Strategy 7.1.2: Implement and improve the Long Term Control Plan so that combined sewer overflows are reduced.**

**Strategy 7.1.3: Reduce stormwater, erosion, upland flooding and combined sewer overflows through green infrastructure, low-impact development and best stormwater management practices.** Green infrastructure including large forests, meadows, wetlands, floodplains and riparian buffers should be retained where feasible in order to naturally store, infiltrate and treat stormwater runoff. Implementation of low-impact development practices incorporate a number of less intrusive measures to allow precipitation to infiltrate into the ground instead of running off into storm or combined sewers. These measures include street trees, rain gardens, bioswales, green roofs, and on-site storage and use of stormwater for irrigation.

**Strategy 7.1.4: Promote natural vegetation, swales, rain gardens, and similarly environmental conscious landscape practices.** The zoning ordinance should be revised to require such practices in connection with industrial, commercial and multifamily development (i.e., exempting single-family and two-family homes). Natural vegetation is especially important, as it requires less watering and pesticides for its care.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The proposed recommendations to remedy existing sewage plant overflows and reduce flows into the combined sanitary/storm sewer will result in significant environmental benefits to the Rondout creek and Hudson River as well as fiscal benefits to the City.*

## **Objective 7.2: Improve the condition and appearance of the City's roadways and sidewalks;**

**Strategy 7.2.1: Seek partnerships and seize upon every opportunity to “green” streets, sidewalk spaces, paths, and waterfront areas.** The City, in partnership with its residents and, when appropriate, the County, should plant street trees, install flower-filled window boxes, and create mini-gardens of potted plants. The City should continue to do so, as often as practical with local organizations focused on beautification, open space and natural resources. To the extent possible larger vacant City-owned open spaces should be considered for their suitability as community gardens either as long-term or temporary uses.

**Strategy 7.2.2: Ensure that Kingston's Bluestone and other historic materials are highlighted and protected in transportation and way-finding projects, and that these projects are planned with the potential of historic materials for placemaking central to the process.** A complete comprehensive survey of Bluestone sidewalks and resources for Kingston, including an inventory of resources held in the City's Bluestone Bank and the development of a process for the use of the Bank's resources should be developed. A prioritized program to restore, rehabilitate, or preserve Kingston's Bluestone sidewalks and resources should also be developed. Regulations should be promulgated regarding the care and preservation of Bluestone by property owners and developers; require building permits and review by the City's Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission for sidewalk repair and construction.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Recommendations to beautify and protect the historic integrity of Kingston streets is not anticipated to result in adverse environmental impacts. Positive benefits to community character are anticipated to result.*

**Objective 7.3: Increase the access and maintenance of neighborhood parks and recreation facilities;**

**Strategy 7.3.1: Implement and prioritize the goals and recommendations outlined in the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan.** The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a detailed and comprehensive planning document that supports maintaining and further developing the City's parks, which are an important asset from a quality of life, recreational and natural resources perspective. Prioritizing the goals and recommendations of the plan and setting a timetable for securing grants and funds to support the work is necessary for implementation.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The City considered the SEQR requirements at the time of preparation of this policy document, and that SEQR review is incorporated here by reference.*

DRAFT

**Funding Opportunity: Environmental Facilities Corporation- Green Innovation Grant Program:** The specific monetary allocation for this grant remains TBD. The Green Innovation Grant Program (GIGP) provides grants on a competitive basis to projects that improve water quality and demonstrate green stormwater infrastructure in New York. GIGP is administered by NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and is funded through a grant from the US EPA.

At the heart of green infrastructure is the goal to manage rain where it falls, reducing runoff volume and the need to treat it through grey infrastructure – much of which is already at or near capacity. Stormwater runoff can overwhelm sewer systems and other clean-water infrastructure, leading to pollution of our waterways. Traditional grey infrastructure is also expensive to maintain. Green infrastructure includes decentralized, site-specific projects that manage stormwater and provide a myriad of additional benefits such as increasing property values, revitalizing communities, improving air quality, sequestering carbon and other greenhouse gases, creating green jobs, improving the walkability of communities, reducing the urban heat island effect, and providing natural habitats, to name a few. Working in parallel with traditional grey, clean-water infrastructure, green infrastructure is a cost effective and efficient tool for meeting the goals of the Clean Water Act.

Competitive projects will:

- Create and maintain green, wet-weather infrastructure
- Spur innovation in the field of stormwater management
- Build capacity locally and beyond, to construct and maintain green infrastructure
- Facilitate the transfer of new technologies and practices to other areas of the State

**Eligible Activities:**

Funding will be available for the following types of projects:

Permeable pavement- (i.e. porous asphalt, concrete, or pavers) Permeable pavement is designed to convey rainfall through the pavement surface into an underlying reservoir where it can infiltrate, thereby reducing stormwater runoff from a site. Permeable pavement includes pervious asphalt and concrete and pervious pavers such as reinforced turf, interlocking modules and pavers.

Bioretention- Bioretention systems are shallow vegetated depressions often referred to by a variety of names such as bio-infiltration areas, biofilters, rain gardens, bioswales, or recharge gardens. They are very effective at removing pollutants and reducing stormwater runoff.

Street trees or urban forestry programs designed to manage stormwater-

Urban Forestry Programs use a detailed inventory and map of existing and proposed trees to manage and maintain their urban forest. These tools help determine planting sites, select appropriate species, schedule maintenance, and evaluate the most effective practices to ensure tree health and stormwater capacity.

Construction or restoration of wetlands, floodplains, or riparian buffers- Riparian Buffers are vegetated or undisturbed natural areas that filter runoff before it enters a waterbody. Floodplains are a natural water right-of-way that provide temporary storage for large flood events, keeping people and structures out of harm's way and preserving riparian ecosystems and habitats. Constructed Wetlands are shallow marsh systems planted with emergent vegetation that are designed to treat stormwater runoff. They are an extremely effective for pollutant removal, and can also mitigate peak rates and reduce runoff volume.

Stream daylighting – This includes the removal of natural streams from artificial pipes and culverts to restore a natural stream morphology that is capable accommodating a range of hydrologic conditions while also providing biological integrity.

Stormwater harvesting and reuse, (rain barrel and cistern projects) Rain barrels are rooftop catchment storage systems typically utilized in residential settings while cisterns are large-scale rain barrels used in commercial and industrial settings.

# Plan: Midtown Core Area

Midtown is the geographic heart of the City and it became the site of many major public facilities after merger of the Villages of Kingston and Rondout, such as City Hall, the main post office, Kingston High School and Kingston Hospital among others. However, Broadway also served as the connector between the two original villages and became a corridor rather than a place. Due to its length, Broadway depended on auto traffic to serve as a commercial corridor providing access and services to motor vehicles on their way between Rondout and Kingston (Uptown). Perpendicular to and forming an "X" with Broadway were the junction of principal rail lines which supported industry behind either side of Broadway. Residential areas for industrial workers and employees of Broadway businesses filled the side streets around these two corridors.

With the introduction of the big-box auto-centric corridor to the north, in the suburban Town of Ulster, and the departure of the majority of manufacturing industry from the City, the Midtown area is in severe transition. Its current configuration has become unsustainable and home to the poorest, most under-served neighborhood in Kingston. In order to reinvigorate the Midtown Area a new approach must be taken.

This approach begins with significant replanning of a central core area around a new use paradigm. Rather than seek to continue the unsustainable pattern of use by attempting to fill empty storefronts, or find new users for defunct industrial buildings, the City should pursue a new pattern of development focused on industry clusters that have organically settled into the area without significant enticement. Generally, new uses should be focused on the arts, education, entertainment and ethnic diversity.

The strategies provided herein are intended to complement and build upon The Midtown *Business, Education, Art and Technology (BEAT)* Plan that was initiated by Mayor Shayne Gallo with the support of education officials from Ulster County. The strategies contained herein were also developed with the understanding that Ulster County is presently funding a Broadway Corridor study that is intended to address traffic circulation and complete street improvements. The recommendations contained in this Plan are general



**Above** (top to bottom): View Broadway looking northwest from the railroad overpass; view of active CSX railroad bridge that crosses over Broadway (West Shore Railroad Line); and view looking north along O'Neil Street in the vicinity of Boice's Dairy and the defunct Delaware & Ulster Railroad yard. A visitor to Midtown experiences a corridor, neighborhoods and former manufacturing nodes that appear, in certain places, past its prime and weary to the eye.



concepts and it is understood that more specific plans and strategies would be developed in the Broadway Corridor Study.

The strategies contained herein are intended to provide a concise action-oriented plan for implementing sound, quality of life enhancements, within Midtown. These improvements include complete street enhancements that strengthen multi-modal connections and improve walkability; visual and physical enhancements to the streetscape and buildings along Broadway; improved housing opportunities through mixed-use adaptive reuse and infill development; and critical parks and recreational investments -- all of which are needed to transform Midtown from an outdated commercial artery, with its surrounding assemblage of industrial, warehouse and wholesale buildings along its railroad corridors, into a socially and economically vibrant place where people in the City and surrounding region want to live, shop, work and be entertained.

### The Need For A New Land Use Approach For Midtown

A visitor to Midtown experiences a corridor, neighborhoods and former manufacturing nodes along its rail lines that appear, in places, past their prime and weary to the eye. The Broadway commercial corridor includes many vacant buildings and lots, mixed-use buildings in various states of disrepair and an aesthetically unappealing visual environment. The hodgepodge of sign styles and satellite dishes mounted on the front of Broadway buildings further diminishes visual appeal.

Noticeably missing from the commercial corridor are amenities, which provide a more human scale such as bus shelters, public rest stations, open spaces, pocket parks, landscaped areas and bicycle amenities. The combination of high vacancy rates, poor visual quality of the corridor, and lack of pedestrian and bicyclist amenities, encourages drivers to speed through the corridor and discourages pedestrian and bicycle use or social interaction.

Even with these challenges, Broadway has emerged as a place within the City where newcomers to Kingston have established businesses (e.g. restaurants, groceries, personal service establishments, churches) – many tied to the changing demographics of the area. Certain industry/activity clusters have also organically settled in the area without significant enticement (e.g. artist live-work units, education,



**Above** (top to bottom): View of hair salon at the corner of Broadway and Cedar Street; view of north side of Broadway between Field Court and O'Neil Street; and view of QUISQUEYA Mini Market, which abuts the UPAC between Cedar Street and Henry Street. A number of recent storefront renovations have replaced transparent glass with reflective or tinted glass that obscures views into local business and detracts from the visitor experience.

healthcare, restaurants, specialized small scale craft industries, wholesalers, etc.). Implementing land use policies that help to facilitate continued growth in these niche industries, rather than thwarting efforts to open such businesses, is one key to revitalizing Midtown.

The significant daily traffic volumes along Broadway, coupled with significant investment in the Ulster Performing Arts Center (UPAC), Ulster County Community College satellite campus, and continued growth in existing industry/activity clusters, all hold the promise of a brighter future for Midtown built around specialized clusters.

However, streamlining the development review process, coupled with targeted *public sector investments*, are needed to provide an environment that facilitates private sector reinvestment in Midtown. A form-based code focusing on the relationship of buildings to each other, to streets, and to open space, rather than land use is also needed to reinforce a sense of place. The following strategies are intended to engage City government, civic and business leaders, and local residents in proactive measures, which can enhance the quality of life in Midtown and in so doing make the area more appealing as a place to reside, visit and conduct business.

## Economic Opportunities For Change

In recent years, there has been a growing pattern of small business owners taking advantage of the corridor's relatively affordable space and high traffic volumes to establish their business enterprises. However, the ability of Midtown to attract new development is currently limited by competition from nearby areas such as Uptown, the Rondout and Ulster Avenue in the Town of Ulster, which have higher income levels to support a greater variety of businesses.

Based upon this understanding, it is recommended that the City of Kingston first focus on helping existing businesses and entrepreneurs to succeed and perhaps expand, while concurrently taking measures to improve the image of Midtown (i.e. complete street improvements to support walkability; and visual and physical enhancements to enhance the environment) so that the City can begin to better market Midtown to prospective businesses and residents.

There are four industry/activity clusters in Midtown that are identified on the Midtown Action Plan Map on page 58. There is a *art and craft industry center* along Cornell Street (i.e. The Shirt Factory & Lace



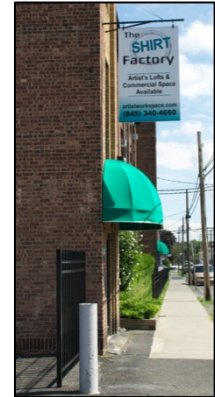
**Above** (top to bottom): View of City Hall that is adjacent to the Kingston Hospital; view of the Ulster Performing Arts Center on Broadway and view of Benedictine Hospital on Mary's Avenue. The existing industry/activity clusters within Midtown should be encouraged to grow further.



Factory); a culture and entertainment center around UPAC; a civics, health and learning center around City Hall and the Kingston Hospital; and a live, work and learn center near the proposed Ulster County Community College satellite campus at the Sophie Finn Elementary School on Mary's Avenue.

These are the areas within Midtown that have the greatest potential for initiating significant change since these areas already have a critical mass and cluster of synergistic activities. They also represent relatively small geographic areas where the impacts of targeted investment would be greatest. While investments should be targeted within these areas, a plan for improvements throughout Midtown should be concurrently pursued.

Within each of these “activity centers” there are a number of sites that are potentially suitable for either short or long-term development or redevelopment, ranging from former industrial buildings that are suitable for adaptive reuse, or greyfields that could be redeveloped with new infill buildings carefully placed to respect surrounding buildings, streets and open space.



## The Land Use Vision: Defining Areas To Begin The Transition

The vision for the revitalization of Midtown does not attempt to revitalize the entire Broadway Corridor with one homogeneous treatment. Rather, it seeks to enhance the existing, diverse industry/activity clusters as unique destinations within the city.

The guiding principles for this transformation are as follows:

1. Make streets within Midtown a comfortable place to bike, walk and use public transit through complete street initiatives (e.g. bike routes, bike racks, bus shelters, crosswalks, etc.).
2. Strengthen pedestrian and bicycle connections between residential neighborhoods and key activity centers.
3. Create public green spaces and public gathering spaces (e.g. parks, squares, rail-trails, etc.).
4. Retain existing business establishments and attract residents and businesses to support a broad range of new and better uses that make the area more appealing as a place to reside, visit and conduct business.
5. Create a sense of place in each activity center by encouraging a mix of compatible uses that is developed in a manner where uses are within easy walking distance of one another.
6. Develop a *neighborhood rehabilitation program* (e.g. to improve sidewalks, streetscape, and infrastructure) for residential areas surrounding these activity centers to complement the City of Kingston Office of Community Development's *residential rehabilitation program*.

In order to create socially and economically vibrant activity centers within Midtown, new development and redevelopment should be directed to designated areas and should conform to a pedestrian-oriented urban form. A new form-based code is recommended to achieve this form. Zoning can also be structured to provide incentives for favored uses and activities.

This vision for the revitalization of Midtown recognizes that public sector investments are also needed to help achieve this transformation. Complete street initiatives are needed to transform industrial streets into streets that facilitate multi-



**Above** (top to bottom): The Milk House by Boice's Dairy, which is an ice cream stand at the corner of O'Neil and Tremper Avenue; view of UCAT bus shelters at the former IBM Kingston plant in the Town of Ulster; and example of public rest station, which could be employed in certain activity centers to improve comfort for visitors. Bus shelters along the Broadway corridor and within activity centers would help to facilitate ridership and improve the comfort for those using public transit.



modal movements in a safe and comfortable manner.

Public sector investments are needed to transform some of the greyfield sites into public green spaces where people can gather, play with their children, relax or be entertained during special events. Without such public sector investments, it will be difficult to attract new residents.

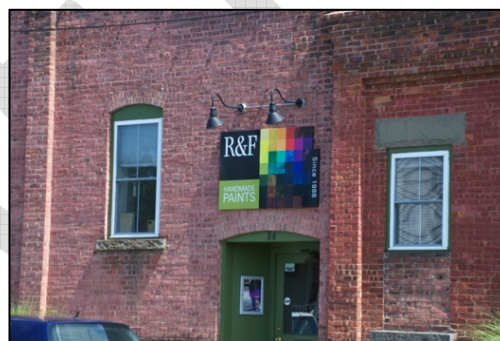
## Art & Craft Industry Center

The anchors for this activity center include: Artist Lofts in The Shirt Factory; and The Lace Factory, which is being converted into 55 live-work units together with gallery and community space. The *arts and craft industry center* is envisioned as a residential, artistic and craft industry center, supported by a small amount of neighborhood retail uses and compatible light industries like those that presently are situated in this area of the City of Kingston.

Public-private partnerships will be necessary to transform this tired former industrial area into a vibrant living, arts and crafts center. The revitalization of the Lace Factory will have a positive effect on this one site along Cornell Street. However, this project could have an even greater impact if the City implemented a complete street initiative along Cornell Street to facilitate pedestrian movements between The Lace Factory and The Shirt Factory, for example.

This activity center is presently an area with no public green spaces and numerous greyfield sites. In other words, it is not a very appealing place to live, especially for residents with pets or children. Public-private partnerships (e.g. incentive zoning or donation of land) are needed to create public green spaces and public gathering spaces in this center. These spaces could be used for an artist market, farmer's market, special events, outdoor performances, and other social activities that help to reinforce a sense of place and community. The creation of such places would, in turn, make the area a more appealing place to live and do business, which would help to facilitate reinvestment in this activity center.

The Midtown Action Plan Map on page 58 illustrates the activity centers in Midtown along with recommended public sector investments. Priority areas for complete street initiatives include the area along Broadway, Cornell and O'Neil and W. O'Reilly Streets. A multi-purpose public square is recommended along Cornell Street.



**Above** (top to bottom): View of Shirt Factory from the corner of Cornell St. and Smith St.; R&F Homemade Paints, which is a craft industry that was established in 1988, and view of vacant Lace Factory on Cornell Street, which is being converted by RUPCO into Artist Lofts together with an arts gallery and community space. The transformation of this area will require long-term public-private partnerships to the physical and economic environment.

A well-designed public square could be utilized as a public park and outdoor performance space. The rail yard for the Delaware & Ulster rail line could become an attractive trailhead for a new *trail* along the route of the D&U. A Midtown Marketplace for artists and/or farmer's market is envisioned as a central feature between this area and the performing arts and cultural & entertainment center, which is described in more detail below.

## Culture & Entertainment Center

The *culture & entertainment center* is envisioned as the highest intensity of retail, restaurant, and cultural activities within Midtown. The anchor for this activity center is the Ulster Performing Arts Center (UPAC). For this area, it is envisioned that both sides of Broadway in the vicinity of the UPAC, would be lined with mixed-use development, emphasizing an increase in retail options on the first floor. It is recommended the City create an incentive program to encourage restaurant and retail uses in close proximity to UPAC with outdoor seating encouraged. Those land uses that have positive synergies with UPAC (e.g. galleries, restaurants, etc.) would be permitted as-of-right under the zoning laws and those with potential negative synergies would be prohibited or only allowed by special permit.



**Above** view of a vacant, but visually appealing “Art Deco” building, which is across street from UPAC and adjacent to vacant lot shown above. There are synergies between eating and drinking establishments and performing arts centers.

To improve the aesthetic appeal of the business district, the Kingston Local Development Corporation (LDC) administers a *façade improvement program* with a maximum grant of \$10,000. It is important that the renovations of building façades respect the original architectural elements of historic buildings and not remove or mask such features. It is further recommended that the Kingston LDC consider expanding its façade improvement program to cover the *renovation of building interiors* in order to address code compliance issues to make vacant spaces suitable for new business establishments. Funding through the New York Main Street program should be sought to fund such an initiative.

Along the Broadway Corridor, *complete street* enhancements must be introduced to better connect this activity center to the surrounding neighborhoods and areas throughout the city. Public transit service must be enhanced to help facilitate increases in ridership; and amenities, such as bus shelters, should be provided along the corridor to improve rider comfort. Other major corridor improvements could include the installation of a traffic roundabouts at key intersections such as Henry Street/O'Neill Street and/or Prince Street/Grand Street/Pine Grove Avenue to act as key points of interest making Midtown a destination instead of a connection. Such roundabouts can include highly landscaped areas, or monuments to add interest and character. Additionally, Broadway is a State Highway (Route 32) from Henry Street to Albany Avenue, and therefore Federal Funding may be available to increase efficiency and improve pedestrian facilities.

## Civics, Health and Learning Center

The *civics, health and learning center* is envisioned as an activity center consisting of governmental, educational and healthcare land uses, surrounded by residential neighborhoods and supported by a small amount of retail and personal service establishments to meet the needs of residents and employees. Professional and medical office uses should continue to be encouraged in this area, including the use of first floor storefronts for such uses.

Existing anchors in this area include, but are not limited to Kingston City Hall, Kingston Hospital, Kingston High School, Broadway Medical Center Building, YMCA and the Andy Murphy Neighborhood Center. These institutions are not only major civic, educational, medical and recreational centers; but they are also major employers for residents in the City and the surrounding region. Their employees support local restaurants and service establishments. It is thus important to create a physical environment that encourages workers to venture out during their breaks to walk along Broadway and frequent business establishments.

The attractiveness of this area could be improved with some public sector investments. For example, the creation of pocket parks could provide residents and workers with green space where they could enjoy a brief respite during their lunch hour. Amenities for bicyclists: such as bike racks, designated bike lanes, or bike trails would help to make this area of the City more appealing for employees, employers and students.

The City should also ensure that its zoning laws explicitly allow such uses and review its development review procedures to ensure there are no inherent obstacles to opening like businesses in this activity center.

The City has shown its support for this activity center by investing in the restoration of City Hall and maintaining a variety of city facilities in this area of the City. It is important that the City coordinate with the Kingston City School District to ensure its high school remains at its present location. The School District has recently committed to significant facilities at the high school over the next several years. Not only is the school an important center of activity, but it is also a major employer that supports local business establishments. The City and School District must work together to understand and provide for the needs of the School District.



**Above** (top to bottom): View of Broadway Medical Center building on Broadway; Kingston Hospital monument sign as seen from Kingston City Hall, and view of Kingston High School. The City must play an active role in retaining these institutions within the City. These institutions are not only major activity centers, but they are also major employers that are critical to the long-term financial health of the City.



## The Live, Work and Learn Center (UCCC Satellite at the Sophie Finn Elementary School)

The *live, work and learn center* is envisioned as an activity center with a concentration of health care and educational facilities that is surrounded by residential areas, supported by a small amount of retail to meet the needs of residents, employees and students. Anchors within this activity center include, but are not limited to, the Sophie Finn Elementary School and Benedictine Hospital both of which are situated on Mary's Avenue.

The Ulster County Legislature approved the purchase of the Sophie Finn Elementary School and adjoining six acres of land at 94 Mary's Avenue in Midtown Kingston. The building is slated to become a satellite campus of Ulster County Community College. The purchase and proposed use is part of the County Executive's *Shared Taxpayer Relief through Innovative Visions in Education* (STRIVE) project intended to create an educational corridor in Kingston. Ulster County Community College (UCCC) will be offering college classes in the building and it is also envisioned that courses would also be offered to serve the needs of Benedictine Hospital and the Kingston Hospital, which are in close proximity.

The County's plans to create an educational corridor in Kingston could have a positive impact on the community. However, these impacts would be even greater with supporting public sector investments in the form of complete street enhancements provided along W. O'Reilly St. and Mary's Avenue to link the school to Broadway. Enhanced pedestrian connections between the Kingston High School and the UCCC Satellite Campus should also be advanced, as many high school students would be eligible to take college level courses.



**Above** (top to bottom): View of Sophie Finn Elementary School entrance and view of Benedictine Hospital. The County's plans to create an educational corridor in Kingston which will have a positive impact on the community. However, these impacts would be even greater with supporting public sector investments in the form of complete street enhancements along W. O'Reilly St. and Mary's Ave. to link the school to Broadway.



The Office of Community Development's *residential rehabilitation program* addresses deficiencies in existing housing stock. This program could be expanded to provide housing for students as the County's plans for the UCCC Satellite Campus are advanced.



**Above** (top to bottom): Example of a farmer's market pavilion that could be established on a portion of a new public square along Cornell Street or on the Kings Inn site; illustration of multi-purpose rail trail along rail bed in Minneapolis MN that is comparable to Delaware & Ulster rail bed; and photo of bike shop at trail head of the above referenced rail trail.

A concerted effort by the City and County, coupled with public-private partnerships, could transform Midtown from bleak to chic.

**Above** (top to bottom): View of Delaware & Ulster rail yard as seen from across Cornell Street; view of existing overgrown D&U rail line as seen looking from O'Neil Street toward Cornell Street, and view of one of the many greyfield sites within Midtown that contribute to the bleak and tired landscape. The transformation of Midtown will require a form-based code to reinforce a sense of place; public sector investments in complete street initiatives and public parks, and public-private partnerships.

Dormitory housing in support of the UCCC Satellite Campus would help to support local businesses as students would frequent these establishments when living in the community. Graduating students would strengthen the City's workforce making the City more attractive to new business.

## Multi-modal Transportation Improvement Strategies

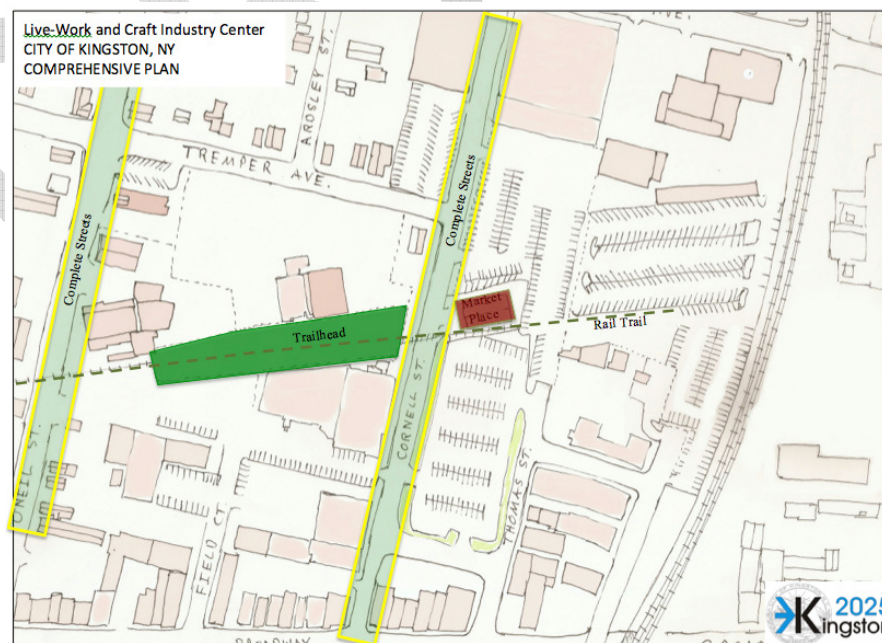
Many of the side streets in Midtown are very wide since they were developed to accommodate manufacturing industries and heavy truck turning movements. These wide streets are not very conducive to facilitating safe pedestrian and bicycle movements, which are necessary to create a vibrant mixed-use activity center. However, these wide streets are also capable of accommodating multi-modal facilities to serve all users of these streets (i.e. bicyclist, pedestrians, public transit and drivers).

The City should work with the County to develop "Complete Street" plans for Broadway, O'Neil, Cornell and W. O'Reilly Streets, as its first priority for such improvements.

## Environmental Enhancement & Greening Space Strategies

There is a need for public green spaces throughout the Midtown area. The City can help to achieve public open space improvements by:

- Converting city-owned vacant lots into pocket parks.
- Creating a vegetated pedestrian and bicycle route along the Delaware & Ulster rail line.
- Coordinating with Ulster County to relocate the D&U rail yard outside the City limits so the yard could then be converted into a public square or green, and serve as the trailhead to a rail trail.
- Integrating smaller green spaces into the design of development projects through incentive zoning.
- Adding green space along public streets.





## Neighborhood and Housing Rehabilitation Strategies

Maintaining the integrity of Kingston's neighborhoods and the quality of its housing stock is an important goal for the City. The various neighborhoods have their own unique identity that reflects their history, geography and sense of pride of its residents.

Strong neighborhoods are the cornerstone of a healthy and vibrant community. The City of Kingston should support and enhance its neighborhoods through new infill housing units that complement existing homes, the rehabilitation/preservation of any deteriorating housing stock, strict enforcement of its building and zoning codes and sidewalk/streetscape improvements. The latter will greatly enhance pedestrian circulation from residential areas to the activity centers making the community a better place in which to live.

It is also recommended that the City amends its existing zoning laws to better regulate the conversion of single-family homes to multi-family units. The conversion of single-family homes should be limited to a certain number of dwelling units, based upon the size of the home and size of the lot on which the home is situated. When too many units are crammed into a smaller building, issues related to overcrowding, and insufficient room to park vehicles off-street become apparent and detract from the neighborhood.

### Realizing Midtown Revitalization

The revitalization strategies and recommended public improvements contained herein are intended to guide the transition of Midtown from a vision to implementation. Realizing the vision for revitalizing Midtown's activity centers and surrounding neighborhoods will be a long-term, multi-step process, requiring long-term commitment from the City, County, and State governments, private and not-for profit sectors, business community and local residents, and other stakeholders.

However, each step can demonstrate visible change and improvement in the quality of life for residents, as well as employees, business owners and visitors to Midtown. Each improvement, will, in turn, make Midtown more attractive to prospective residents and investors. *Generic Environmental Discussion: To be added.*



**Above** (top to bottom): View of middle-class neighborhood along O'Neil Street looking north from the corner of O'Neil and Tremper Avenue; A concerted effort by the City's Office of Community Development perhaps with the support of RUPCO should be considered to facilitate a *neighborhood rehabilitation program* in support of existing housing. A rehabilitation program is also needed to support reinvestment in the activity centers.

## **Goal 8: Promote a new planned commercial node in Midtown centered around Education, the Arts, Entertainment and Ethnic Diversity;**

### **Objective 8.1: Establish an outdoor venue/park and program several arts-related programs or events per year;**

#### **Strategy 8.1.1: Create incentives for public spaces.**

Through incentive zoning, encourage future redevelopment to provide new public spaces, perhaps with density, height and coverage bonuses along the Broadway Corridor. Such spaces along Broadway could provide opportunity for public assembly, performances as well as activate the street.

**Strategy 8.1.2: Acquire vacant lots and blighted properties for public spaces and urban agriculture.** The City could acquire through purchase, blighted properties and vacant lots in order to provide new public spaces either solely or as part of a larger public/private redevelopment project. These public spaces could be used for traditional pocket parks or urban agriculture and community gardens as appropriate. More than 800 acres of land in Kingston are classified as vacant, including 38 acres owned by the City of Kingston. While every effort should be made to promote investment in blighted properties, those properties that are beyond saving and that tend to be located in the most at-need areas of the City should be considered for incorporation into the network of community gardens.

**Strategy 8.1.3: Consider the development of a new City park.** Although much of the City is served well by the several existing public parks in the City, there is sentiment that the growing Latino community is not well served. Consideration should be given to the construction of a soccer field somewhere in the vicinity of Midtown given the strong cultural preference in the area indicated during public outreach. Additionally, the Recreation Master Plan indicates the need for athletic fields in and around Midtown, although the space challenges are clear and the Plan proposes accommodating such demand through contract use of private parks at Kingston Babe Ruth Park or Metropolitan Field, optimizing field space at the High School, lighting Loughran Park or adding a field to Kingston Point Park or Dietz Stadium. However, the guiding principles of this plan clearly support providing recreation near the populations demanding them, and opportunities to provide a quality soccer field IN Midtown should be explored, including an indoor recreational use of an obsolete warehouse as described hereafter. Beyond athletic fields, one or two pocket parks (as also recommended by the Recreational Master Plan) would provide potential playground facilities near to existing population density and could also provide opportunities for dual use as community gardens.

**The New York Open Space Plan** explicitly calls for greater support of urban agriculture. Based on this, the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation has provided funding for New York City urban agriculture initiatives. The plan specifically recommends providing funding support for farming opportunities in low-income areas, on vacant public and private land, on “underutilized” parkland for farming and educational purposes, for brownfield areas, and for assisting in the remediation of toxic sites of potential community gardens and farms. The plan emphasizes that “This is especially important in cases where municipal park agencies have limited resources and community-based not-for-profits lack the funding match requirement yet have the labor resources to maintain successful permanent community garden sites.



**Strategy 8.1.4: Consider demand and suitability of obsolete warehouses for conversion to an indoor recreational use.** One option may be an indoor athletic field as was done with the former Newburgh Armory - now the Newburgh Unity Center which houses an artificial multipurpose turf field in the former drill hall. Another possibility may be an indoor ice skating rink. Currently the closest rinks are located in Montgomery and Saugerties. An additional facility in Kingston may support local youth and school hockey programs and double as a cooling facility for the elderly and other at-risk groups during heat waves.



**Above** (top to bottom): The Newburgh Armory is an example of adaptive reuse of a defunct facility for the purpose of community recreation and provision of community services. Photo: Mid-Hudson News.

**Funding Opportunity: Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation:** Up to \$16 million in Funding is available under the EPF Municipal Grant Program for the acquisition, planning, development, and improvement of parks, historic properties, and heritage areas. Municipalities and not-for-profit organizations with an ownership interest in the property are eligible to apply. Historic properties must be listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places. Heritage Areas projects must be identified in the approved management plans for Heritage Areas designated under section 33.01 of the Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law. All grant awards under this program come with long term protections, either through parkland alienation law, conservation easements or covenants recorded against the deeds.

**Eligible Applicants:**

- Municipalities
- State Agencies
- Public benefit corps
- Public authorities
- Not-for-profits

**Eligible Activities:**

- *Park Acquisition, Development and Planning Program - for the acquisition, development and planning of parks and recreational facilities to preserve, rehabilitate or restore lands, waters or structures for park, recreation or conservation purposes and for structural assessments and/or planning for such projects. Examples of eligible projects include: playgrounds, courts, rinks, community gardens, and facilities for swimming, boating, picnicking, hunting, fishing, camping or other recreational activities. To ensure the public benefit from the investment of state funds, public access covenants will be conveyed to the State for all park development projects undertaken by not for profit corporations. Conservation easements will be conveyed to the State for park acquisition projects undertaken by not-for-profit corporations.*
- *Historic Property Acquisition, Preservation and Planning Program - to improve, protect, preserve, rehabilitate, restore or acquire properties listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places and for structural assessments and/or planning for such projects. All work must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. To ensure the public benefit from the investment of state funds, preservation covenants or conservation easements will be conveyed to the State (OPRHP) for all historic property grants.*
- *Heritage Areas System Acquisition, Development and Planning Program - for projects to acquire, preserve, rehabilitate or restore lands, waters or structures, identified in the approved management plans for Heritage Areas designated under section 33.01 of the Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law and for structural assessments or planning for such projects.*

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Converting obsolete buildings and vacant parcels for open space and community garden uses is not likely to result in significant adverse environmental impacts. Any proposal to reuse brownfields in this manner would require environmental testing to insure public safety. The policies intended to promote the establishment of additional public spaces and programming of events is likely to draw people to the Midtown Area as well as allow local residents with a catalog of recreation within walking distance. While it may increase vehicular traffic to the area, much of this traffic will be traffic that would otherwise pass through the area without a recreational destination(s) - for example Uptown residents seeking recreation in the Rondout or Rondout residents seeking recreation in Uptown. Additionally, the increase in vehicular traffic will at least be somewhat mitigated by the ability of local residents to enjoy a park or public assembly space without having to travel by vehicle. The acquisition of blighted properties, or the programming of new public spaces will require the expenditure of public funds, which could result in adverse fiscal impacts. It is envisioned that the additional public cost would be warranted given the relative lack of recreation in the densest part of the City.*

## **Objective 8.2: Reduce crime in Midtown Census Tracts to within existing City-wide averages;**

**Strategy 8.2.1: Relocate the Police Headquarters or a substation to Midtown.** Increasing 24 hour police presence would have a beneficial impact on the Midtown neighborhood, the area of the City that generates the highest demand for Police Services. (See also: Mayor Gallo's BEAT Initiative)

**Strategy 8.2.2: Incorporate basic "safe streets" design criteria for new or amended site plan applications within Midtown.** Such design criteria should include standards promoting the lighting of the sidewalk from internal building spaces, elimination of open alleys or deep recesses along pedestrian rights of way, the elimination of opaque fencing, elimination of blank building façades, banning papering or painting of vacant spaces (seen as places where people may be "lurking"), eliminating safety gates and barbed wire, incorporation of stoops and balconies for façades facing the public right of way, and the adequate lighting of pedestrian ways.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The relocation of Police Headquarters to Midtown would require a site-specific SEQR review. The policies of increasing the safety and perception of safety in Midtown is anticipated to result in positive economic impacts and increased patronage of area businesses.*

## **Objective 8.3: Improve the appearance of the Midtown Area;**

**Strategy 8.3.1: Encourage interesting private signage.** Midtown is not as homogenous as other neighborhoods within the City. While Uptown and the Rondout have aesthetic character that is rooted in the local historic architecture, Midtown is much more eclectic by comparison and includes a number of interesting and different "landmark" examples of signage that enhance the visual interest of the area. Examples of this includes an art deco chrome façade, life-size Elvis and Marilyn Monroe statuary atop a local pub, and a large mural of a hot dog plastering the side of a building. While out of the ordinary, and probably not strictly conforming to sign regulations, these visually interesting landmarks provide interest and should be further encouraged. As a center of arts, some flexibility should be considered to allow the opportunity for such interesting projects as murals, statuary, oversized or unique Americana signage, and unique architecture to proceed without extensive zoning impediment in Midtown only.



**Above:** Broadway Joe's with its lifesize Elvis and Marilyn Monroe statuary atop of the establishment roof adds a unique character to Broadway.

**Strategy 8.3.2: Administer façade improvement program through Community Development Agency (CDA) or Local Development Corporation.** The CDA should consider administering a façade improvement program emphasizing technical assistance, focusing on low-cost interventions such as awnings, paint and new signage. These should be especially promoted in connection with any change of tenancy. Such façade improvements could be funded through the Main Street Program and/or the Urban Cultural Parks program.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Programs that have the goal of improving the visual appearance of the Broadway corridor will also improve the social and economic vitality of this mixed-use business area. The renovation of buildings would be required to comply with the Uniform Building Code criteria and such improvements will help to address such issues as Lead-based paint removal, building safety and other code compliance issues, that may exist, as improvements are made. The proposed policies here of encouraging interesting signage and promoting façade improvements through grants is not anticipated to result in significant adverse environmental impacts.*

**Funding Opportunity: NYS Main Street Program:** The New York Main Street (NYMS) Program was created to provide resources for the purpose of assisting New York's communities with Main Street and downtown revitalization efforts. The program has up to \$5.2 million available to stimulate reinvestment in properties located within mixed-use commercial districts and adjacent neighborhoods by providing resources with the goal of establishing sustainable downtown and neighborhood revitalization and investing in projects that provide economic development and housing opportunities.

**Eligible applicants:**

- Municipalities
- Not-for-profits including Business Improvement Districts with 1 year or more of service

**Eligible Activities:**

Applicants may request between \$50,000 and \$250,000 for two eligible activities: Building Renovation: Matching grants to building owners for renovation of mixed-use buildings. Recipients of NYMS funds may award up to \$50,000 in grant funds to building owners. Building renovation grant funds are used to renovate façades, storefronts and commercial interiors, with an additional \$10,000 per residential unit up to a per building maximum of \$100,000.

Streetscape Enhancement: Up to \$15,000 in grant funds for streetscape enhancement activities, such as: planting trees, installing street furniture and trash cans; providing appropriate signs in accordance with a local signage plan; and performing other supportive activities to enhance the NYMS target area. A streetscape enhancement grant will only be awarded as an activity ancillary to a building renovation project and cannot be applied for on its own.

**The Target Area Eligibility:** Project must be located in an eligible target area. An eligible target area shall mean an area: (i) that has experienced sustained physical deterioration, decay, neglect, or disinvestment; (ii) has a number of substandard buildings or vacant residential or commercial units; and (iii) in which more than fifty percent of the residents are persons of low income, or which is designated by a state or federal agency to be eligible for a community or economic development program.

**Objective 8.4: Decrease vacancy rates and non-commercial use of Broadway storefronts to below 5%;**

**Strategy 8.4.1: Consider adopting form-based Overlay District.** For the Broadway corridor, the City may wish to analyze basic building forms and determine desired basic aesthetic requirements. The City could then establish a form-based district that would regulate the basic form, size and appearance of buildings, as well as the uses that can occupy ground-story street frontages, and upper stories of the building. This would allow any conforming application, whether for a new structure or re-occupancy or renovation of an existing structure to be approved with little or no review other than a Building Permit or Certificate of Use, so long as it conforms with the established building forms. Any construction outside of the basic building form, could also proceed under existing Planning Board processes and zoning.

**Strategy 8.4.2: Consider reducing the linear footage of commercial frontage on Broadway.** Currently the frontage of Broadway is primarily non-residential from Albany Avenue through to Delaware Avenue. This volume of commercial space along Broadway is not sustainable as evidenced by the number of vacancies along this corridor. The City should consider allowing residential multifamily development, especially in the vicinity of Albany Avenue and Delaware Avenue as a means of reducing the total square footage of retail space along Broadway and making remaining commercial space more compact and sustainable. Other uses that could be encouraged in these areas would be public uses, such as farmers markets, bus terminals, government buildings, parks, community gardens and public gathering spaces.

*"First we shape our buildings; and afterwards our buildings shape us."*

- Winston Churchill

**Historic Note:** Stated while addressing the nation with regard to the re-building of the 'Houses of Commons' after its destruction during the Second World War.

**Strategy 8.4.3: Streamline Broadway Overlay District design standards.** The existing design standards for the Broadway Overlay District provide a good basis for insuring compatibility of design. However, Broadway is a more visually eclectic environment than other areas of the City, and strict conformance should not be required, where an applicant proposes a visually interesting and aesthetically pleasing high-quality design. It is noted that administration of the district design guidelines by a separate approving board - the Heritage Area Commission - adds a step to the process and delays approval time, thereby acting as an impediment to improvement of structures and economic development. It is therefore suggested that the Planning Board verify conformance, upon review and recommendation by City Planning Staff or a retained architectural review consultant.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The strategies and policies herein would not result in significant physical changes and adverse environmental impacts are not anticipated as a result. Design standards and form based zoning would streamline the development review process while ensuring desired building form and aesthetics. Reducing commercial square footage in favor of additional residential especially along the northern reach of Broadway will transform Midtown from a continuous commercial corridor. This will likely take some time as existing non-residential uses will be permitted to remain. Ultimately, this will have the effect of reducing turning movements along Broadway in the vicinity of the future roundabout at Interstate 587/Albany Avenue/Broadway. Also, the value of remaining commercial spaces and the demand therefore should improve as the supply is diminished and the area population is increased, especially if recommendations for improvements to area walkability are implemented concurrently.*



**Objective 8.5: Attract several new significant gallery and/or museum uses within comfortable walking distance of UPAC;**

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: No environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of this recommendation.*

**Objective 8.6: Promote additional housing for artists and craftsman;**

**Strategy 8.6.1: Adjust regulations for artist lofts and expand them to include live-work lofts as well.** Current regulations governing artist lofts are unnecessarily onerous. For example one provision states that there will only be up to 500 square feet of residential floor area per loft and another states that no more than one person per 300 square feet of residential area may occupy the loft. Therefore, by extension all lofts are limited to one person. Provisions governing separate sign regulations for lofts versus other commercial establishments are unnecessary as is a provision requiring a "three-fixture sink." These provisions should be reviewed and unnecessary restrictions eliminated to encourage these types of uses. Further, consideration should be given to eliminate the expiration of these permits, as these types of uses are really not different than a standard mixed-use building that are desirable through large areas of the City. Current zoning limits the use to production of art, which along with Artist Loft is not a defined term. The use should be expanded to Live-Work spaces to allow for the production of retail goods by craftsman, primarily for sale on premises. Such an expansion will expand the use to individuals that may not fall into the normal definition of "artists" such as jewelry makers, woodworkers, framers, furniture makers, upholsterers, antique restorers as well as office spaces for professionals such as architects, engineers, lawyers, accountants, and IT professionals. It is also noted that while artist lofts are currently defined and regulated, they are not explicitly mentioned in any of the City's district regulations. Artist lofts could be limited to Midtown (at least in the short term) to support economic development objectives in this key area.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The Midtown area has successfully demonstrated demand for artist-loft type housing. To the extent that regulations reflect this demand, development projects may be attracted. These development projects will require site-specific SEQR review. The policy of attracting and accommodating additional residential/commercial space within a mixed-use core area is a sustainable development policy that should result in reduced energy consumption, infrastructure costs, greenhouse gas emissions and improved public health as compared with a sprawling development pattern.*

**Objective 8.7: Establish the area as a destination for multicultural food and dining providing outlets for fresh, natural and prepared food and produce, as well as restaurants offering a variety of cuisines and alternative healthy fast food options;**

**Strategy 8.7.1: Promote outdoor dining.** Outdoor dining is currently permitted in Kingston. This practice should be promoted since sidewalk cafés contribute to a district's sense of place and provide an additional social draw. Furthermore, any type of additional outdoor nighttime activity increases safety. In reference to the front yard setback standards, an application for a restaurant with an outdoor café is a case in which allowance of an increased setback is appropriate. In addition, the City and its residents should support events that focus on outdoor dining (e.g., an outdoor tasting; progressive dinner: where diners go to a different restaurant for each course.) Incentives should be explored to promote outdoor dining, from allowing outdoor dining within the City right-of-way, to decreased parking requirements, to consideration of decreased property taxes or inspection fees.

**Strategy 8.7.2: Encourage or construct a regional farmer's market.** A year round shelter from which area farmers and/or local gardeners could sell fresh produce would be a welcome addition to the Midtown area, much of which is considered a "food desert" according to Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County. A large scale "terminal market" available to regional farmers, and with basic facilities including rest facilities, heat and water, could become an outlet serving the region's restaurants and small groceries. Additionally, secondary retail facilities could be made available in adjoining spaces for specialty goods often sought for in local farmers markets, such as ornamental plants, local artisan goods, and prepared foods.

**Strategy 8.7.3: Consider partnering with an established not-for-profit, to fund, construct and operate a community kitchen.** With the intent of encouraging community gardens and local food production, the City may wish to consider developing a community kitchen that residents can use to clean, prepare, cook, and package produce and agricultural products. In addition to being a resource for local urban agriculture, such a kitchen could serve additional purposes of providing nutritional and culinary training to residents as well as provide food to local food banks and food programs.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: These policies are intended to result in increased social equity and public health by providing nutritious foods to lower income areas. The strategies listed encourage development of a farmers market and community kitchen and therefore will require site-specific SEQR review. The strategy of encouraging outdoor dining, is intended to enhance the value of public streets as places, enliven the neighborhood and make the area more welcoming to pedestrians. It is anticipated to result in positive economic benefits to the City and no adverse environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of these policies.*

**Funding Opportunity: Agriculture and Markets:** The Agriculture Development Program has allocated up to \$3 million in grants for eligible applicants to assist in reducing the cost of financing the construction, expansion or renovation of agriculture project(s) that have a direct benefit to New York producers and significance to the region served by the eligible applicant. The program will be administered by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM). Funding provided by the NYSDAM will be used for a project or projects designed and intended for the purpose of establishing, maintaining, or expanding agricultural operations, or for providing facilities and/or markets for the production, manufacturing, processing, warehousing, or distribution or sale of New York crops, livestock and livestock products.

The goal of this program is to promote agricultural economic development through funding a project or projects that will increase New York farm viability through expansion, value added production, diversification, or long term reduction of operating costs. The minimum amount of program funds that may be applied for is \$30,000. The maximum amount of program funds that may be applied for is \$500,000. The program will generally provide up to 50% of the total cost of an eligible project. The program may provide additional funding to a project if a compelling financial need is identified. Direct grant administration costs shall not exceed 10% of the grant request.

**Eligible Applicants:**

- Municipalities (including Counties)
- Local & regional Development Corps
- Public Benefit Corps
- IDAs
- Farm Credit Institutions
- Not-for-profits

**Eligible Activities:** An eligible project is a project designed and intended for the purpose of establishing, maintaining, or expanding an agricultural operation, or for providing facilities and/or markets for the production, manufacturing, processing, warehousing, distribution or sale of crops, livestock and livestock products as defined in subdivision 2 of section 301 of the Agriculture and Markets Law.

**Objective 8.8: Focus any future investment in new government and educational facilities within Midtown to the extent practical, but not in prime commercial frontage;**

**Strategy 8.8.1: Focus future governmental and educational facilities along side streets or blocks behind Broadway.** Where governmental uses must be located directly on Broadway, public plazas should be provided in front of the buildings so as to continue the visual and pedestrian interest of Broadway.

**Strategy 8.8.2: Leverage the new SUNY satellite Campus.** A satellite campus offering evening classes could help to activate the area during evening hours, and would also attract more consumers to the area during the day.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: These policies are intended to bring population to Midtown, but to reserve prime ground floor space along Broadway for commercial use. This policy is not anticipated to result in adverse environmental impacts, but is anticipated to result in positive economic impacts from bringing consumers to Midtown and positive social impacts by providing secondary education opportunities in close proximity to lower income neighborhoods.*

**Objective 8.9: Maintain residential affordability and owner-occupancy of Midtown neighborhoods to ensure that Midtown remains livable for existing residents;**

**Strategy 8.9.1: Acknowledge and regulate the traditional mixed uses along Broadway.** The C-2 and C-3 zoning districts which generally comprise the traditional urban mixed-use areas of Midtown (and Uptown) do not permit apartments in upper stories of commercial buildings. Yet that is clearly the existing environment. Residential may have at some point been removed from the C-2 and C-3 districts with the hope that eventually these uses would transition out in favor of office and other uses. However the likelihood of this happening is remote. Rather than ignore the principal development pattern of the central spine of the City, mixed-use residential buildings should be permitted, but with clear density and minimum floor area standards for residential uses.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Acknowledging and permitting the upper-story apartments that provide much of the City's affordable rental housing should help to improve the sanitary condition of existing housing by lowering the regulatory requirements for improving existing housing stock. No adverse environmental impacts are anticipated from making the City's land use regulations more compatible with the existing built environment.*

# Plan: Uptown Core Area

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Wall Street in Uptown Kingston was identified in 2013 as one of "America's 50 Great Streets" by the American Planning Association. It is an honor bestowed upon a place that exhibits authentic characteristics that have evolved from years of thoughtful and deliberate planning by residents, community leaders and planners. This honor says much about the investments already made in the protection, stabilization and enhancement of this great neighborhood. The practices that have led to the current quality of community should be built upon, made efficient and enhanced where appropriate, but the underlying regulations should be maintained. Areas of Uptown should look to Wall Street for inspiration and connectivity, but should not replicate the environment wholesale. Doing so would not be authentic and would dilute the uniqueness of this great place. Instead, other areas should look to develop upon their own unique characters in a way that makes other blocks in Uptown their own great places.



**Above.** Corner of Wall Street and North Front Street in Uptown Kingston, NY.

## **Goal 9: Encourage continued and vibrant mixed-use land use patterns in Uptown centered around area historic resources and County offices;**

### **Objective 9.1: Work to attract additional patronage to the Uptown Business district.**

**Strategy 9.1.1: Create a centrally located plaza for small concerts and events somewhere near the Stockade District.** The City should look at opportunities to develop a small public park or plaza to support public assembly as well as small concerts. Academy Green Park and Forsyth Park provide opportunity already, however, there is not a direct interplay between those existing Parks and the majority of Uptown businesses along Wall Street, North Front Street and at Kingston Plaza. A public space in comfortable walking proximity to Wall Street and the State Senate House Historic Site would better drive patronage of Uptown as TR Gallo Park attracts patronage of the Rondout Business District. Possible locations include in front or alongside the County Offices, at the Old Dutch Church, or at the Senate House Historic Site.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The policy to seek a public assembly space for events within Uptown is not anticipated to result in adverse impacts. Site-specific SEQR review will be required to ensure that parking resources are adequate and that the space will not result in unsafe traffic conditions.*

### **Objective 9.2: Promote multi-modal transit options, and better pedestrian/vehicle circulation;**

**Strategy 9.2.1: Work with County to Construct Bus Terminal/Transit Hub.** The County has recommended that this terminal be constructed in Uptown adjacent to County Offices. (See Also - UCTC Intermodal Facility Site Location document). However, the City should petition the County to consider relocating this hub to Midtown, perhaps in the vicinity of the confluence of several former rail lines, that have the potential to become rail trails near the corner of Cornell Street and Broadway, where there is



already substantial public parking available. Alternatively, this hub should be located Uptown at one of the several sites investigated.

**Strategy 9.2.2: Promote on-street bike lanes in Uptown.** The already narrow streets throughout Uptown, make it difficult to construct off-road bicycle facilities, and sidewalks should be reserved for pedestrians. The City should construct on-street painted bicycle lanes throughout the Uptown as well as bicycle racks at all public facilities.

**Strategy 9.2.3: Promote implementation of Ulster County Transportation Council's Uptown Stockade Area Transportation Plan.** The County Study analyzed vehicular and pedestrian circulation and parking in the Uptown area and made extensive recommendations which warrant implementation.



**Above.** Illustrative example of on-street bike lane, which could be considered for Uptown.

**Strategy 9.2.4: Prohibit on-street deliveries from 8 AM until after 9 PM.** Given the narrow width of Uptown streets, daytime deliveries pose a significant impediment to traffic and patronage of the area.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: These policies are consistent with the policies of the Transportation and Mobility sections of the plan, which seeks to encourage expanded mass transit usage, promote complete streets, improve public safety and reduce congestion. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of these policies. The construction of a bus terminal/transit hub will require site-specific SEQR review.*

### **Objective 9.3: Promote increased availability of parking;**

**Strategy 9.3.1: Maintain meters and time limits for on-street parking in the Uptown area.** Consider systems, which have variable rates based on location and demand as well as alternate payment methods to accommodate users most efficiently.

**Strategy 9.3.2: Incentivize cross easements between adjacent non-residential and mixed-use lots.** By incentivizing cross easements, the City can potentially create more efficient parking in rear yards that could serve the employees of commercial uses during the day, with some capacity to also serve residential in the evenings.

**Strategy 9.3.3: Improve directional signage to public parking lots.** Public parking lots should be easy to find, and preferably free. A portion of parking can be reserved for employees of local businesses, and a permit sticker could be issued on an annual or bi-annual basis to identify employee's vehicles. (See Also: UCTC - Uptown Stockade Area Transportation Plan)

**Strategy 9.3.4: Promote smarter and more attractive public and private parking lot design.** Such design should incorporate sustainable green infrastructure such as bio swales, rain gardens, and tree planting islands that are not curbed and are designed to receive stormwater. For areas of lower traffic the use of porous pavement, grasscrete, or paving stone should be considered as an alternative to asphalt.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: These policies are intended to improve the efficiency of parking resources and to incorporate more environmentally sensitive stormwater management approaches. These policies are not anticipated to result in adverse environmental impacts and should improve impacts related to stormwater runoff and traffic congestion.*

**Objective 9.4: Support and encourage specialized retail and service uses to build on the existing quaint retail environment;**

**Strategy 9.4.1: Actively encourage entrepreneurship.** While Midtown comprises a higher economic development need, Uptown has more of a successful critical mass of unique and interesting businesses that draws patronage to the area. The City should consider leveraging the success of the retail environment in Uptown by establishing one or two business incubators through the City Community Development Agency or the County Industrial Development Agency. These incubators could offer low-rent spaces for limited pre-arranged terms to help new businesses get up and running and establish local patronage. After the pre-arranged term (usually two years) the business would have to relocate to another space, presumably in the City of Kingston.

This type of an incubator can give preference to unique and interesting retail, service and restaurant ideas that would mesh well with the historic character of Uptown, the arts, education and ethnic character of Midtown and the tourist and water-enhanced nature of the Rondout. After the two year incubation period, the new business could be "placed" with participating properties in any of the three commercial neighborhoods in the city.

In addition to providing affordable leases on limited terms, the CDA could hire a staff person to chair the program that could provide training, seek funding and administer grants or arrange for low-cost financing on behalf of city businesses.

**Strategy 9.4.2: Seek to attract regional sporting events to Dietz Stadium.** The City should attempt to attract sporting events of regional significance including State High School Tournaments for football, soccer, field hockey and track and field. If a significant number of sporting events could be attracted, this may support one or more sport specialty stores in the area.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The policy of providing an incubator and promoting added use of Dietz stadium is likely to draw additional patronage to Uptown. To the extent that significant sporting events are held at Dietz Stadium, traffic and daytime population in the area may increase. Dietz Stadium has good regional traffic access via Washington Avenue, which leads directly to the NYS Thruway. Additionally, area businesses provide services such as dining and lodging for the families of athletes, within comfortable walking distance reducing the need for additional vehicle trips. Generally the benefits of drawing patronage to the mixed use Uptown Kingston area has advantages of serving the regional population in a more sprawling development pattern. Benefits of economic development generally outweigh potential impacts related to increase population and traffic.*

**Objective 9.5: Insure that public investment respects the historic character of this area;**

**Strategy 9.5.1: Develop directional signage unique to Uptown.** Street signage, directional signs, lighting, and street furniture should all be unique to the Uptown area and reflect the history of the area.

**Strategy 9.5.2: Encourage the County to rehabilitate historic structures to fulfill space needs whenever possible.** Additionally, as existing buildings are improved or renovated, they should be made to respect the pedestrian realm to the extent possible. For example the existing six-story County

office building is significantly monolithic in appearance from the street. It is imposing and dwarfs pedestrians on the street. By projecting the first three stories instead of recessing the first two stories, the building could be made to seem less imposing from the street. If designed properly, this extension could also add visual interest to the streetscape.

**Strategy 9.5.3: Promote uniform streetscape improvements throughout Uptown.** Taller mast-arm streetlights ("cobra lights") should be replaced with pedestrian-scaled lights for the sake of consistency within the Stockade District, unless they are historically significant in their current locations. The unique character of the Stockade District is magnified at night when modern details and distractions are difficult to see in the darkness. This character could be exploited and the setting made even more dramatic than it already is by installing authentic gas lamps at appropriate locations near the districts oldest buildings. This would help to magnify the feeling, already present at night, of having stepped back in time.



**Above.** Illustrative example of uniform streetscape improvements that could be considered for Uptown.

Source: Vermont Transportation Fund

Remove smaller underperforming street trees and undersized planters and enlarge planters by a foot on the three sides away from the buildings to provide room for root growth and expansion.

Provide sidewalk extensions at corners and/or mid-block locations to provide added sidewalk space for trees, outdoor dining, and benches. This may require elimination of some on-street parking spaces. It is vital that any new sidewalk be constructed of bluestone as appropriate to match surrounding surfaces.

Provide kiosks with neighborhood maps and business listing at several locations throughout Uptown.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The policies proposed herein are intended to insure that public investment in Uptown is compatible with the historic character of the area and promotes historic preservation to the greatest practical extent. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of these policies.*

## **Objective 9.6: Improve the connections physically and in character between Kingston Plaza and Uptown;**

**Strategy 9.6.1: Consider terminating Schwenk Drive at Fair Street.** Doing so would allow uninterrupted pedestrian access from Uptown, and no lots are served via Schwenk Drive east of Fair Street. Benefits to pedestrian flow would have to be weighed against potential increase to vehicular traffic congestion, if any. The abandonment of this right of way would have a few added benefits. First the former roadbed could be utilized to provide additional public assembly space very close to the business district and Senate House Historic Site. A portion of the roadbed could be left for an off-road cyclist connection. Clinton Avenue could be made one way northbound north of John Street resulting in decreased pass-through traffic in the vicinity of the Senate House Historic Site. With the elimination of this cut through, more pass-by traffic would be generated on Wall Street and North Front Street potentially increasing the value of this area for retail, restaurant and commercial. Ultimately the traffic implications of this strategy will require further investigation prior to possible implementation.

**Strategy 9.6.2: Allow for new mixed-use commercial to extend down the Fair Street and/or Westbrook Lane.** These streets connect Uptown to Kingston Plaza, but are generally in character with neither. The west side of Fair Street north of North Front Street and the southeast side of Westbrook Lane are a large open surface parking field and a large semi-vacant office building with drop curbs and excessive parking. Consideration should be given to allowing townhouses in traditional row buildings along both of these frontages. To the extent necessary, along Fair Street, these townhouses could be constructed over the existing parking field due to the grade change.



**Above.** Photo of new mixed use building at Mashpee Commons a mixed-use retail shopping center in Mashpee, MA.  
Source: Planit Main Street

**Strategy 9.6.3: Allow residential or expanded commercial use of Kingston Plaza.** Kingston Plaza is over parked. Parking utilization is a fraction of supply. The City should consider allowing additional use of excess parking for townhouse or multifamily residential or additional commercial use that is not desired elsewhere in the City, such as pad sites to accommodate large retail. While the City should not encourage large-scale retail elsewhere in the City, the Kingston Plaza is an alternative to the Route 9W corridor in Ulster that could generate tax revenues for the City while not endangering the character of existing City commercial areas.

**Strategy 9.6.4: Provide a trail along the Esopus Creek.** The course of the Esopus Creek meanders, just a quarter mile from Uptown and is an untapped resource for attracting additional visitors to the area. The City should explore seeking funding for acquisition of easements along the stream and construction of a stabilized dirt trail for walkers, joggers, fisherman, mountain bicyclists and non-motorized boaters such as kayakers and canoeists. A good portion of the Esopus Creek's banks within the City travel along the rear of the Kingston Plaza, so the City may be able to achieve acquisition of easement rights to a significant portion by simply negotiating with the owner of this large property. (See also: UCTC Non-Motorized Transportation Plan)

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: The construction of a path along the Esopus Creek will demand consideration of site-specific impacts at the time of design. However, as a policy, the enhancement of public cycling and pedestrian facilities is not likely to result in environmental impacts and is likely to result in significant benefits to public health, safety, air quality, noise, all as a result of decreased automobile reliance. The possible abandonment of Schwenk Drive for vehicular traffic will likely have broad traffic implications that will require further SEQR review prior to implementation. Allowing additional residential use along Fair Street, Westbrook Lane and in Kingston Plaza itself is likely to add population to the existing Uptown mixed-use neighborhood. Concentrating future density in proximity to the existing mixed use node is significantly less impactful to the environment than accommodating future density in remote undeveloped areas in a sprawling development pattern.*

**Objective 9.7: Promote traditional mixed-use development at densities consistent with the existing built environment;**

**Strategy 9.7.1: Require active uses on the ground floor (including restaurants and realtors).** The pedestrian experience is enhanced by uses that include display windows and bring customers to the area. Requiring these types of uses, as opposed to office or residential uses, helps enliven mixed-use areas. Those uses that promote minimal street-level activity should be limited to upper floors. A



coordinated effort or campaign to decorate windows either with interesting seasonal product displays, or with decorations painted directly on windows can add to the appeal of Uptown and draw residents and visitors. These type of displays can be coordinated with school art classes or children's service clubs like scouts and 4-H. As opposed to Midtown, which struggles to appear safe from crime, Uptown should look to window painting of vacant storefronts to continue the visual interest of the street.

**Strategy 9.7.2: Provide more concrete design standards for development in the Stockade Area.** The Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission regulations in the Zoning Chapter (Article 9) should be reconciled with Chapter 264 (that calls for creation of a Landmarks Preservation Commission) that regulates the Stockade District. One set of standards and review should be promulgated for all historic, landmark and design districts by one single reviewing body. It is suggested that this single body include members of the current Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Heritage Area Commission.

Additionally, existing design criteria provided in both sections of the code are nebulous in comparison with the authority of the Commission to regulate such details as rooflines, architectural details, building materials and colors. Additionally, the Commission(s) have authority not only to regulate contributing buildings, but also new construction buildings, with little or no limit to their authority specified in the code.

New or existing non-Landmark structures within the existing Landmark Districts should be subject to new design guidelines similar to the Broadway Overlay District design guidelines that provide concrete guidelines for how new buildings should relate to existing surrounding buildings. Such guidelines should be reviewed by the Landmarks Commission and the Kingston Heritage Area Commission. The introduction of concrete guidelines should speed review by telling applicants in advance the character of buildings that the Commission is seeking.

The City should explore other measures to streamline the review process for historic resources without undermining protections.

*Generic Environmental Impact Discussion: Requiring active use and continuous visual interest of existing ground floors is intended to maintain the usability of the area as a pedestrian retail environment. No adverse impacts are likely as a result of this policy. Streamlining the historic preservation review process is likely to result in economic development and private investment in historic resources. To the extent that the regulations are revised in a manner that does not compromise protections, no adverse impacts are likely to result.*

# Plan: Rondout Core Area and Hudson River Waterfront

The Rondout Area has received the most and the most recent ongoing planning attention of all areas of the City. This is in part due to the availability of public funding which resulted in urban renewal planning in the 1960's (Broadway East), a rehabilitation and preservation plan for Broadway West in 1976, an Urban Cultural Park (Heritage Area) plan in 1980, a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) in 1992 and follow up Implementation Plan in 2001. Urban Renewal funding was used to implement the plans for Broadway East and for the rehabilitation of the West Strand. The waterfront promenade along the Rondout Creek has been planned and developed using state and federal funding.



**Above.** Corner of Broadway and West Strand in the Roundout Core.

Source: Panoramio

In 2011 Hurricane Irene resulted in significant flooding along the Rondout Creek from heavy rainfall. In 2012, Hurricane Sandy flooded the Rondout area due to significant winds and a tidal storm surge. In response to rising waters and Global Climate Change, the City undertook study of the vulnerability of the Rondout to sea level rise which culminated with *Planning for Rising Waters: Final Report of the City of Kingston Tidal Waterfront Sept 2013*. This study provided further recommendations on how the tidally-influenced areas of the City should be developed in the future. The recommendations of this report are incorporated herein as appropriate.

**Goal 10: Encourage vibrant mixed-use land use patterns in Rondout centered around waterfront access, restaurants and tourist attractions, and active recreation;**

**Objective 10.1: Safeguard the Historic Rondout from rising sea levels, while balancing the economic needs of existing businesses and respecting the historic character and architecture of the area.**

**Strategy 10.1.1: Develop a Kingston Waterfront Long-term Resiliency Plan.** Sea level rise will impact existing residences, businesses, parks, streets, waterfront promenades, trolley tracks, breakwaters and jetties, utilities, storm and sanitary systems and the wastewater treatment plant. The City should implement the recommendation of *Planning for Rising Waters* to prepare a Long-term Resiliency Plan that provides long-term site-specific strategies for the construction of structural fortifications, adaptations, or planned retreat as appropriate.

**Strategy 10.1.2: Evaluate the use of natural buffers and green shoreline infrastructure to reduce flood risk and erosion and conserve natural resource functions.** Such shoreline infrastructure as wetland biomass, reef balls, and green spikes in rip rap can be used to attenuate damaging wave action and prevent erosion.

**Strategy 10.1.3: Require that any proposed new private structures or major renovations with proposed ground floor elevations lower than 13 feet above 2014 mean sea level be constructed to FEMA standards for construction in flood zones.** Current (2014) 100-year flood elevation is 8.2 feet. New York State building code standards require at least two feet of freeboard above 100-year flood elevations. High range projections for sea level rise in 2060 and mid-range projections for 2100 are for 3 feet. To safeguard persons and property from future flooding loss, the City should require that any significant new private real property be constructed in a manner that conforms to current requirements for construction in flood zones. Examples of requirements applicable to construction within flood zones may include such safeguards as not constructing on fill, requiring construction on pilings, prohibiting residential occupancy to elevations above flood elevations, and requiring breakaway walls.

**Strategy 10.1.4: Require that any proposed new public structures or infrastructure or major renovations be constructed to withstand flood elevations of 14 feet above 2014 mean sea level.** Current (2014) 100-year flood elevation is 8.2 feet. High range projections for sea level rise for 2100 are for 5 to 6 feet. Long-term planning for public infrastructure and facilities should be designed and located in a manner that will not subject them to future flood risk, based on high-range projections.

*Generic Environmental Discussion: The recommendations to proactively plan for Sea Level Rise along the City's waterfront will result in decreased impacts to the Rondout Creek and Hudson River following future severe storm events. Public safety and property will be better protected and the area will become more physically and economically resilient. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of these policies.*

**Objective 10.2: Draw additional visitors to the Rondout by leveraging and expanding existing recreational resources. Increase the number of recreational events held by the City and not-for-profits at the Rondout;**

**Strategy 10.2.1: Continue to build upon the existing Kingston Point Park for new recreation facilities.** Establishing Kingston Point as a major recreational facility was a recommendation of the Urban Cultural Parks study, and has been well implemented. Kingston Point Park offers a Pavilion, Picnic Area, Volleyball Courts, Playground, Kayak/ Small Boat Launch and Swimming. The neighboring Rotary Park at Kingston Point offers a second Pavilion, Softball Fields, BMX Track, Dog Park, Nature Trails, Trolley Landing, Fishing and Bird watching. The City should continue to focus future park investments in this area, including consideration of a soccer field at this location, making Kingston Point a destination with diverse recreational offerings. The dike and pier should be re-established in order to provide a walkway out to the Kingston Point Lighthouse and contemplated improvements to the existing dog park should be implemented. (See also LWRP Implementation Plan) The Kingston Point Park marsh complex should be maintained as a natural buffer for attenuating wave action during flood events.

The Urban Cultural Parks Plan recommended the re-establishment of docking facilities for Dayliner and connection via trolley to the Rondout Core. This plan continues to recommend such facilities, which would also serve to connect the other park facilities and the end of the Hudson Promenade to the Rondout Core.

It is noted that Kingston Point Park is at serious risk of inundation over the next 100 years. Any significant investment or construction of facilities must consider the long-term viability given future inundation.

**Strategy 10.2.2: Promote appropriate private redevelopment of Island Dock, as governed by sound planning for sea level rise, along with construction of a new passive/interpretive park at its eastern tip.** Create Island Dock Park located on the east tip of Island Dock in conjunction, and in cooperation with the private redevelopment of Island Dock. Island Dock is completely within the 100-year floodzone. Any private redevelopment must be done in a manner consistent with recommendations for future sea level rise. Contingent upon the findings of the recommended Long-term Resiliency Plan, the best approach for adaptation may be for the City to purchase the Island for open space purposes of flood storage and wave attenuation. If used for maritime purposes including cruise ship dockage or Marina, the improvements should be built in a manner that will adapt to rising sea level and storm surge.



**Above.** Steel House Restaurant and Bar on the Kingston Waterfront in Rondout.

**Strategy 10.2.3: Provide continuous public access to the Hudson River Waterfront from Block Park to Kingston Point and on to the Town of Ulster via the future Hudson Landing Promenade.** Public access should be provided along the waterfront on a riverfront trail which may deviate from the shoreline in some locations given the exigencies of a working waterfront. The trail should provide access from Island Dock, to Block park, and then eastward along the West Strand through the park and continue to the tip of Kingston Point. From Kingston Point, the access should travel north via the future Hudson Landing Promenade to the boundary of the Town of Ulster. (See also: LWRP Implementation Plan pg. 15)

**Strategy 10.2.4: Consistent with City-wide recommendations for complete streets, promote the conversion of area roadways to a "complete street."** Reconstruct East Strand to accommodate cars, pedestrians, bicycles, trolley service and local business delivery needs, and over time extend these multi-modal facilities along North Street, and south along Dock Street. (See also: LWRP Implementation Plan pg. 15). Also consider opportunities for widening sidewalks throughout the areas especially Broadway to allow for cafes and other active sidewalk uses.

**Strategy 10.2.5: Continue to permit and promote additional cultural and museum uses along the Strand.**

*Generic Environmental Discussion: The implementation of any of these policies that result in construction, including redevelopment of Island dock, or physical improvements along the shoreline will be subject to site-specific SEQR review. The policy of providing public access to the Rondout and redeveloping Island Dock or other area recreational facilities has the potential to draw additional population to the area. Impacts associated with traffic and added population must be weighed against economic benefits to existing area businesses that will help to support the existing mixed-use environment. Generally the concentration of population and commercial interest in existing mixed-use areas is less environmentally impactful than a sprawling development pattern that invests in remote greenfield sites. Recommendations to convert East Strand to a complete street are consistent with the recommendations of the Traffic and Mobility Chapter and should result in decreased automobile traffic, decreased energy usage and greenhouse gas generation and increased public health and safety.*



### **Objective 10.3: Encourage additional year-round retail, as well as event programming;**

**Strategy 10.3.1: Promote additional use of Rondout public recreational facilities during cold-weather months, and encourage area restaurants to participate.** The Rondout's parks are actively programmed with concerts and festivals through the warm-weather months. During the winter, economic activity in the Rondout significantly tapers off. The City should continue to promote active programming of Rondout Area parks during cold weather months and increase activities as possible. Current programming includes Sinterklaas Arrival Day and related activities. Possible other ideas include an Oktoberfest event over several weekends, a Restaurant week event, or a first night celebration. The City may wish to consider constructing a heated pavilion for these types of events at the T.R. Gallo Park. Such a pavilion could also serve as a site for a Christkindlmarkt similar to the one held in Bethlehem, PA. which brings retailers and craftsmen from the area to sell Christmas-related arts and crafts. Other possibilities could include watering the public plaza at T.R. Gallo Park to construct an artificial ice skating pond. Activities should be focused around Cornell and T.R. Gallo Park as those facilities are closer to the Rondout business district.

*Generic Environmental Discussion: This policy is intended to increase the viability of the area as a mixed-use core. Currently seasonality makes it difficult for businesses to successfully operate year round and serve the local population. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of this policy.*

### **Objective 10.4: Promote recreational use and working waterfronts utilizing Kingston's many marinas and deep water access for docking by cruise ships and for boat yards.**

*Generic Environmental Discussion: This policy is consistent with the City's Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, which has already addressed SEQR.*

### **Objective 10.5: Protect the existing character of the neighborhood.**

**Strategy 10.5.1: Borrow and extend Broadway Overlay District Design Standards.** The existing design standards for Broadway provide a good basis upon which to regulate buildings in the Rondout and insure that new structures fit into the fabric of the neighborhood. It is noted that administration of the district design guidelines by a separate approving board, lengthens and delays approval time, thereby acting as an impediment to improvement of structures and economic development. It is therefore suggested that the Planning Board verify conformance, upon review and recommendation by City Planning Staff.

**Strategy 10.5.2: Implement a long-term solution to odor and flooding problems at the wastewater treatment plant.** This should be a main priority. Short term solutions have been implemented and include chemical treatment to mask the odor problem. The City should secure the funding to construct tank seals and system wide controls to provide a more sustainable and cost effective solution. (See also LWRP Implementation Plan pg. 16) Additionally, the current WWTP site is located within an area that is subject to periodic flooding, and for which flooding frequency is expected to increase as sea level rises. The energy and cost value of locating the plant at low elevations must be weighed against flooding considerations, and an approach to mitigate future flood impacts must be explored.

*Generic Environmental Discussion: These policies are intended to make the Rondout more appealing areas, both aesthetically and in character. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of these policies.*

**Goal 11: Encourage development of a new Hudson Landing mixed-use area consistent with the Hudson Landing Design Manual;**

**Objective 11.1: Promote construction of the first phase of the proposed project;**

**Objective 11.2: Construct public improvements and public amenities of the project;**

**Strategy 11.2.1: Promote a Waterfront Trail along the Hudson River.** The Ulster County Non-motorized Transportation Plan endorses a “Legacy Trail” along the west side of the Hudson River. (pg. 27 & 30-31) A greenway stretching from Kingston north to Saugerties. The existing waterfront public access extending from Island Dock to the Maritime Museum is a first step, which should be continued north to the Hudson Landing, where it could join the Hudson Landing Promenade. The promenade recently received \$1.2M in State funding in 2013 to support the first phase of construction. However, more funding is needed to provide the full path along the AVR Hudson Landing frontage, and the City should seek additional funding wherever possible.

*Generic Environmental Discussion: The Hudson Landing Development was the subject of a detailed SEQR review. Implementing the approved plan will result in the impacts and benefits described in the environmental findings of that review.*



**Above.** Master Plan for Hudson Landing and AVR Community.

# Plan: The Future

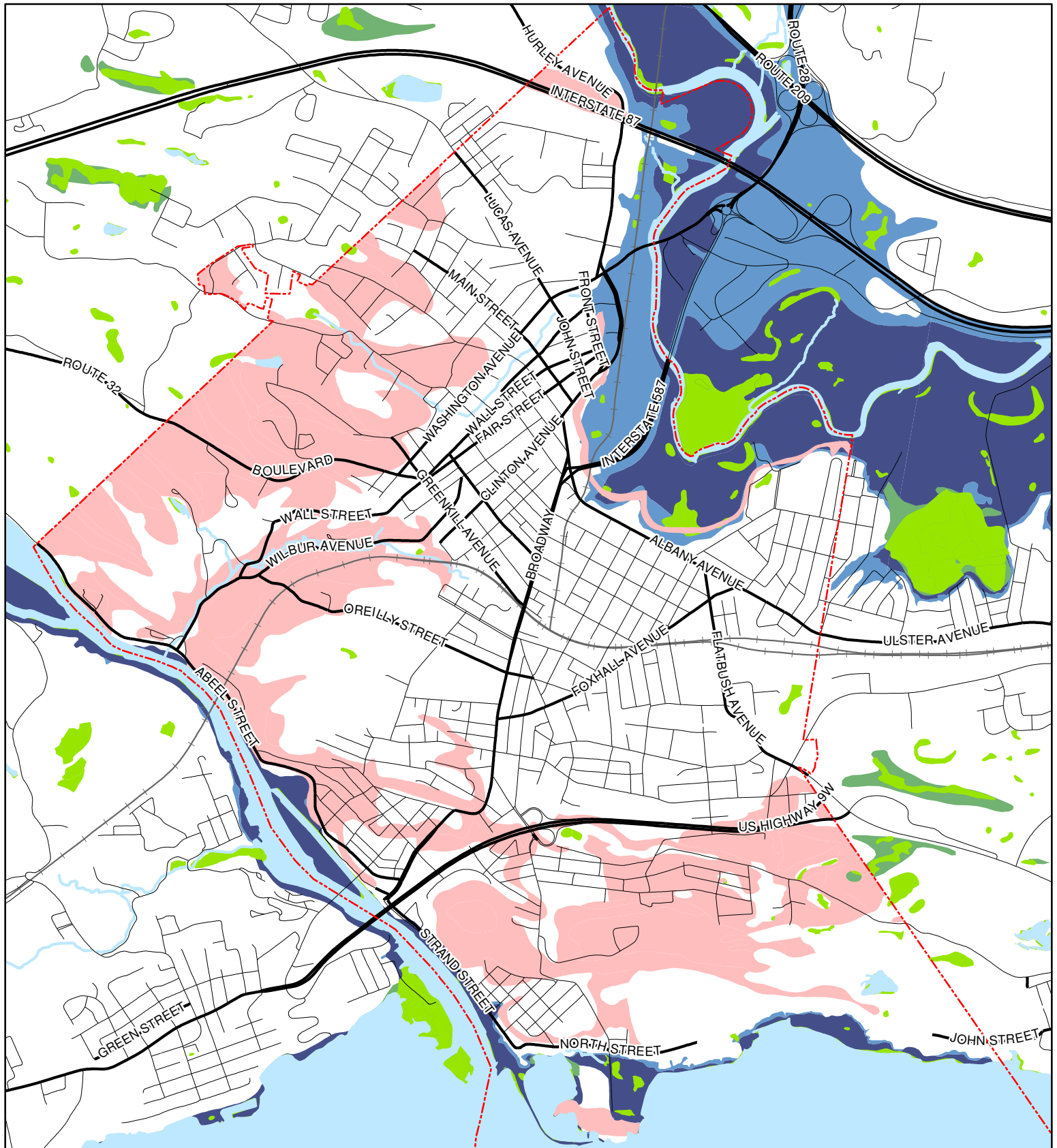
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A Comprehensive Plan that sits on the shelf is as effective as having no plan at all. The best chance at sustainable planned growth is achieved when the Plan includes a strategy to insure its employment and periodic updating. In recognition of the time and effort that has been expended in the preparation of this Comprehensive Plan, and in acknowledgment of the fact that no plan can account for all possible eventualities and outcomes, it is the desire of the City of Kingston that this Plan become an integral part of the operation of local government. To this end it is the final recommendation of Kingston 2025 that a local law be adopted that requires a review and report be commissioned and delivered to the City Common Council each year before the City Common Council adopts its annual budget.

For this purpose, it is suggested that the City Common Council assemble a five to ten member Comprehensive Plan Review Committee to be comprised of the City Planner, a Common Council member, a member of the Planning Board, a member of the Zoning Board, an appointed representative of the local chamber of commerce or other business group, the City Engineer, and such other members-at-large as are chosen by the Common Council. Such group should review the Kingston 2025 Plan and its Implementation matrix and identify which recommendations have been implemented and prioritize those recommendations which have not yet been implemented. The Committee should also make recommendations as to what issues may have arisen over the preceding year that may require a partial or comprehensive reexamination of the Plan.

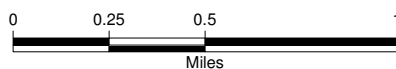
It is suggested that instituting such a process, will make it more likely that the goals and objectives identified herein may be made a reality, and that this Plan will become an intrinsic element of City local government, thereby unifying the efforts of its Common Council, Planning, Zoning and other development review boards, as well as the local business community and residents.





A Vision for Our Community  
[www.kingston-ny.gov/2025](http://www.kingston-ny.gov/2025)

Sources: Ulster Co. GIS  
 December 2014  
 Prepared by: Shuster-Turner



#### Legend

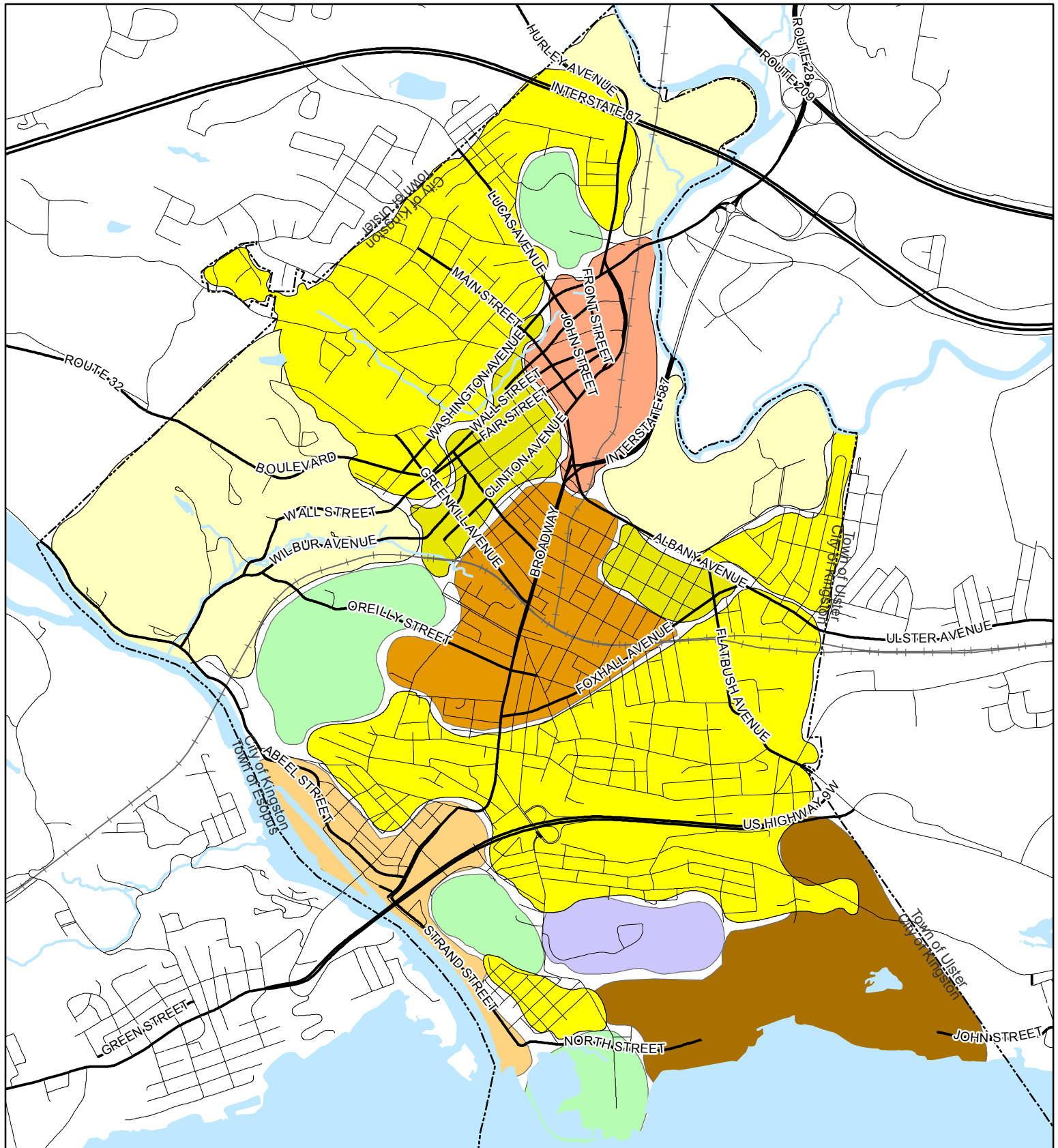
- City Boundary
- Waterbodies
- Severe Slopes
- NWI Wetlands
- NYS DEC Wetlands

#### Environmental Constraints

##### FEMA High Risk

- FEMA 100 Year Flood
- FEMA 500 Year Flood





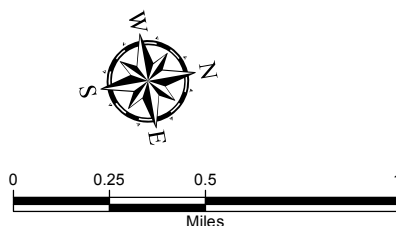
## Generalized Land Use Plan



A Vision for Our Community  
[www.kingston-ny.gov/2025](http://www.kingston-ny.gov/2025)

Sources: Ulster Co. GIS  
 December 2014

Prepared by: Shuster-Turner



### Legend

City Boundary	Public Facility/Open Space	Midtown Mixed-Use Core
Waterbodies	Conservation Density Residential	Landing Mixed-Use Core
	Moderate Density Residential	Uptown Mixed-Use Core
	Urban Density Residential	Tech Park
	Rondout Mixed-Use Core	