

Nyack Comprehensive Plan Update

Public Workshop: Economic Development

Meeting Summary

Prepared on behalf of:

The Village of Nyack
 9 N Broadway
 Nyack, NY 10960

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BFJ Planning

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Appendix: Workshop Presentation

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Introduction

The Village of Nyack hosted the sixth public workshop in the process to update the Nyack Comprehensive Plan on April 26, 2016, at the Nyack Center. This workshop was focused on Economic Development. The workshop was attended by approximately 20 members of the general public, in addition to members of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and representatives of the Board of Trustees.

Mayor Jen Laird White opened the workshop by explaining the overall process and introducing members of the consultant team. Next, the lead consultant, BFJ Planning, presented an overview of the program and Comprehensive Plan process. James Lima of James Lima Planning + Development then provided an overview of current economic conditions in the Village, as well as some issues and potential opportunities to generate future economic growth. Following the presentation and a brief coffee break, the consultant team led a Town Hall-style discussion to talk about issues and opportunities. Content from the discussion is summarized below.

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Workshop Agenda

- **Welcome**

- **Presentation**
 - Introduction, Status Update, Timeline
 - Existing Conditions
 - Issues and Opportunities
 - Policy Recommendations

- **Town Hall Discussion**
 - Economic Development

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Town Hall Discussion

- Nyack has two main geographic opportunities:
 - Waterfront: Linear access along the waterfront would be a benefit; Former River Club Restaurant should be replaced by a multi-vendor use like Chelsea Market or Fanueil Hall; The John Green House would benefit from waterfront corridor that brings activity to the waterfront.
 - Superblock: Problem is private ownership preventing a change in use or redevelopment; Need litigation to be resolved.
- A trolley linking downtown to the waterfront would improve connectivity. There is not enough foot traffic currently for viable waterfront retail.
- Activity loops—How do you make people gravitate to the waterfront at different times of the day?
 - Waterfront activity loops need signage and views.
- Opportunities for infill in the southern waterfront area (Piermont, Burd, privately owned parking lots).
- Need to improve the visual experience on Main and Piermont.
 - Rewards for reaching the waterfront, signage to draw people in.
 - People don't walk to what they can't see.
 - Signage to identify the waterfront and historical markers.
 - Wayfinding with consistent branding.
 - Interpretive signage (history)
- Commercial future
 - Build on existing cultural institutions: make the existing strong before creating new.
 - Commercial development is tied to tourism—Nyack's riverfront Village experience.
- Alternative workspaces and growth in home employment.
 - How do you incentivize and support?
 - Tax incentives and low-cost loans from New York State.
 - Small-scale incubator.
 - Grants to offset constructions costs.
 - Empire State Development, Federal grants, NYSERDA.
 - Build the private market—catalysts.
- How to fill existing vacant space?
 - Light industrial, artisanal
 - Commercial office market is weak in Rockland and Westchester—but many businesses are looking for smaller spaces.
- Millennials are looking for multi-unit buildings and density brings in retail.
- Is there too much focus on tourism? Need critical density to sustain.
 - Or does tourism drive the success of downtown?
- Need targeted help for downtown businesses and a healthier mix of retail.
- Foot traffic appears to be increasing in the past two years due to tourism.
 - Visit Nyack campaigns
 - Hopper House (Whitney Museum connection)
- Few businesses can survive on locals alone.
- Regional Malls
 - Shadow on downtown retail.

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- Need for a different kind of businesses than the malls—cutting edge, mom-and-pop, high end.
- Nyack needs a combination of approaches—density, tourism, access to NYC, preserve Village character.
- Typical to talk about density of housing—but Nyack also needs a density of jobs.
- Several large employers have closed, creating a drag on all-day activity.
- Cultural anchors would benefit the Village (e.g., Whitney Museum).
- Can Visit Nyack attract artisanal retailers?
- Shared retail space, co-location of complimentary uses.
- Transportation is a constraint—and potential opportunity.
- Superblock—redevelopment should be a reflection (comparable scale) of the north side of Main Street.
- Keep the outdoor farmers market.
- More incremental/small-scale development—rebrand the Superblock.
- Is there a way to quantify the impact of second homes?

Conclusion

The Public Workshop on Economic Development generated an intimate but robust conversation on challenges facing the local economy, potential opportunities to capitalize on, and sometimes differing views on a vision for generating future economic growth. The Village's visual character, especially in the downtown, history, and the Hudson River waterfront were all viewed as potential opportunities. Retail and commercial markets in the downtown are still somewhat struggling and participants discussed how to weigh the relative benefits and potential impacts of increased density (i.e., in people and critical mass) and reliance on tourism to help bolster the local economy. While there is no single answer, there was general agreement that the Village should find a strategy that balances existing character while finding ways to sensitively grow the population and continue attracting outsiders to the Village to enhance the local economy without losing the character that local residents value.

The next step in the process of developing the Comprehensive Plan will be for the Steering Committee to discuss outcomes from this workshop to begin developing preliminary recommendations that should be discussed at the Steering Committee Public Hearing on May 25. The BFJ team will continue to refine the existing conditions research based on feedback from this meeting and will develop a complete draft of the comprehensive plan for presentation on May 25.

PLAN NYACK



Economic Development Public Workshop

April 26, 2016

Blueprint for the Future



Agenda

1. Welcome (7:00 – 7:10)

2. Presentation (7:10 – 7:45)

- Introduction, Status Update, Timeline
- Existing Conditions
- Issues and Opportunities
- Policy Recommendations

3. Coffee Break (7:45 – 8:00)

4. Roundtable Discussion (8:00 – 9:00)

- Economic Development

Introductions

Steering Committee

Jen Laird White, Mayor

Doug Foster, Trustee

JC Brotherhood

Bill Batson

Roger Cohen

Paul Curley

Elijah Reichlin Melnick

Frances Rivera

Rodger Stevens

Jack Dunnigan, Alternate

Village Staff

Jim Politi, Village Administrator

Bob Galvin, Village Planner

Marcy Denker, Sustainability Coordinator

Don Yacopino, Building Inspector

Consultant Team

BFJ Planning

Perkins Eastman

James Lima Planning + Development

Sherwood Design Engineers

Turner Miller Associates

COWI Engineers

Appleseed

Introductions

BFJ Planning

Susan Favate, AICP, PP

Simon Kates, AICP, LEED AP

James Lima Planning + Development

James Lima

Brent Oltz

Comprehensive Plan Status Update

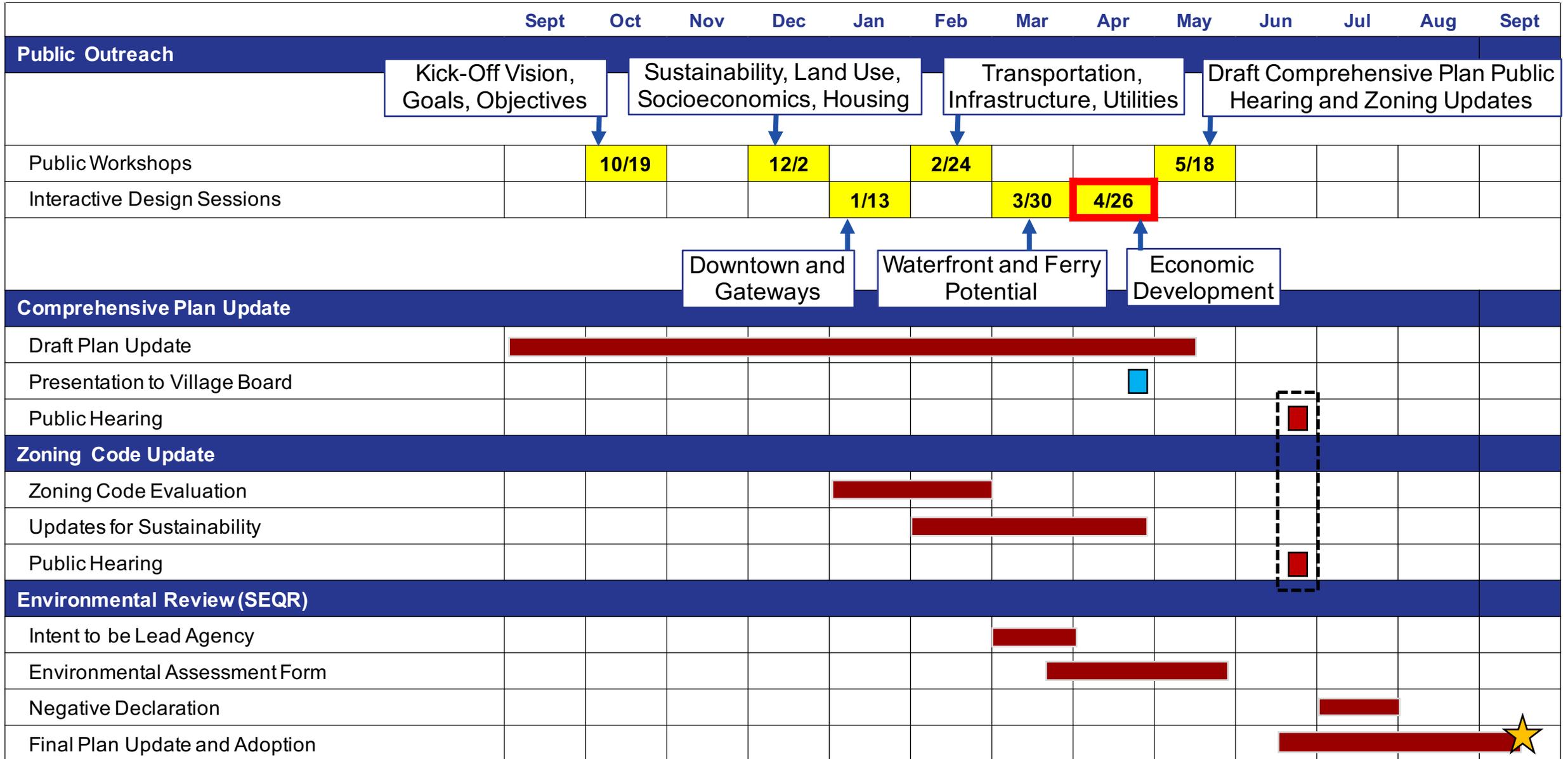
- Tonight is the sixth public workshop out of seven
- Team is working on DRAFT comprehensive plan chapters and the Village is posting them online as they are completed.
- DRAFT chapters will be revised based on input at public workshops as the team develops recommendations
- A full DRAFT plan will be completed in late spring/early summer for review by the public

Comprehensive Plan Chapters

- 1. *Introduction and Vision***
2. Regional Context and History
3. Socioeconomic Trends and Housing
4. Land Use and Zoning
5. Infrastructure and Utilities
6. Transportation
7. Environmental Resources, Parks and Open Spaces
- 8. *Historic, Cultural, and Municipal Resources***
- 9. *Economic Development***
- 10. *Future Land Use Plan and Implementation***

* Drafts Online * ***Drafts Nearing Completion***

Timeline



 Stakeholder Workshop

 Public Hearing

 Plan Adoption

Existing conditions

Nyack in the regional economy

Quality of life attributes

Nyack in the regional economy

+ Commuting distances

- Suffern: 20-30 min (car)
- White Plains: 25-40 min (car)
- Midtown: 90 min (TZx + Metro North)

+ Tappan Zee Bridge

+ Mass transit

- No direct rail to Midtown
- Reflected in: land use, development patterns, real estate value



Nyack in the regional economy

+ A shopping, cultural, and leisure destination

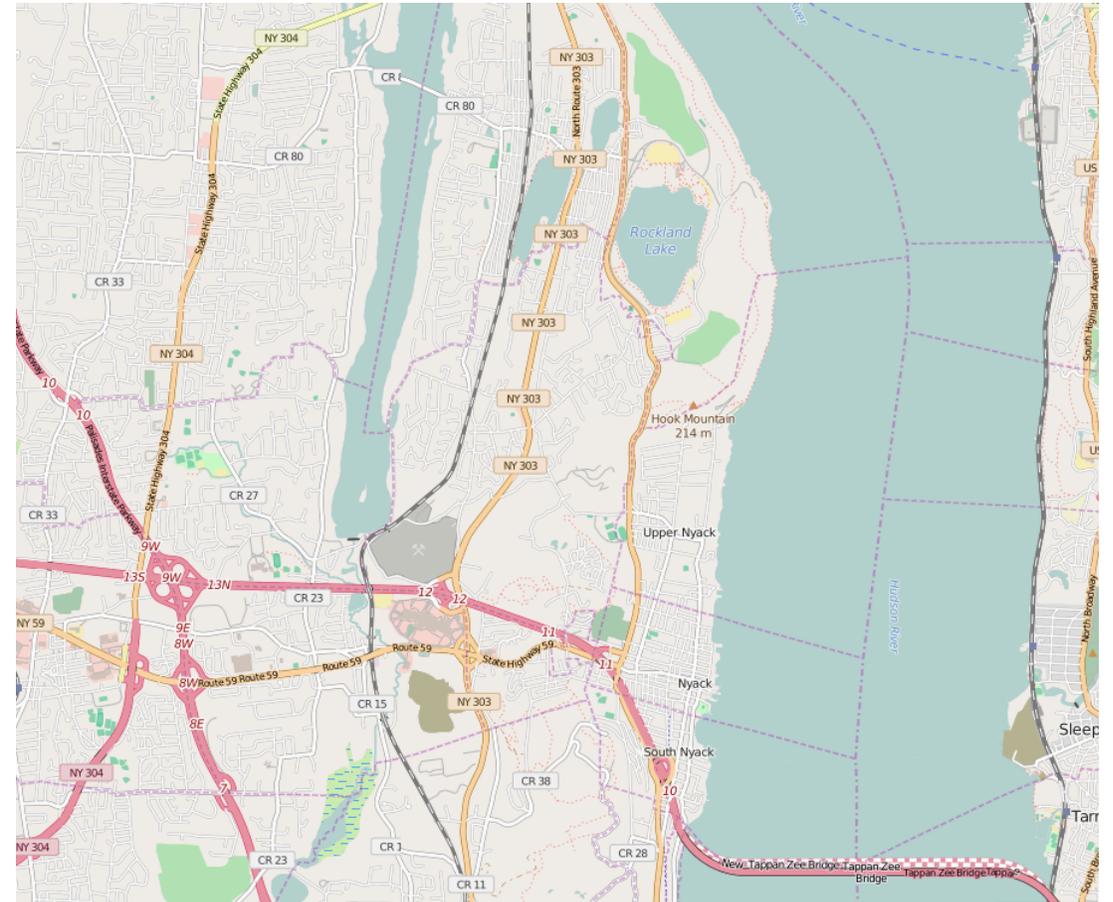
- 120+ retail and hospitality establishments
- 17 arts, education, and recreation establishments



Sources: Economic Census of the United States (2012)

Nyack in the regional economy

- + A shopping, cultural, and leisure destination
- + A downtown for 27,000 area residents in 6 communities
 - Meeting entertainment, leisure, shopping needs of the region
 - Hospital, recreational, and arts facilities serving the broader community
 - Among few opportunities in region for public waterfront access



Source: American Community Survey (2014).

Nyack in the regional economy

- + A shopping, cultural, and leisure destination
- + A downtown for 27,000 area residents in 6 communities
- + A regional destination and gateway to the lower Hudson Valley.
 - 2014: Visitor spending +4% in Hudson Valley (\$3 billion); +6% in NYC.
 - Walkable, bikeable waterfront village close to NYC.



Source: Tourism Economics (2015).

Nyack in the regional economy

+ Nyack has approx. 4,000 jobs

+ Major employers include:

- Nyack Hospital (1,650 jobs)
- Rockland County YMCA (222 jobs)

+ Major sectors include:

- Health care: \$250M revenue
- Office uses: \$72M revenue
- Retail: \$57M revenue
- Hospitality: \$36M revenue



Sources: Economic Census of the United States (2012); Rockland County Chamber of Commerce

Quality of life attributes

- + Compact downtown
- + Socioeconomic diversity
- + Arts and culture orientation
- + Hudson River views and boating
- + Hudson Valley location and context
- + Relative affordability
- + Family friendly



Issues and opportunities

Economic trends and opportunities

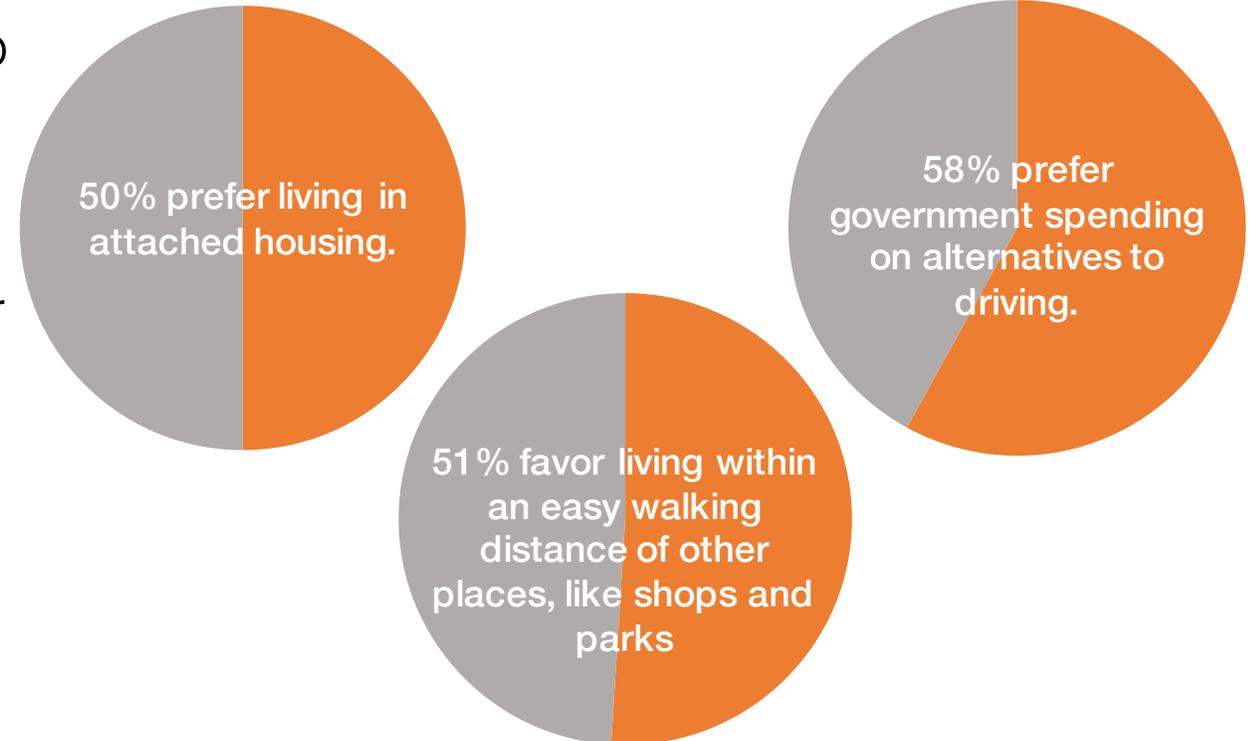
Issues in Nyack

Economic trends and opportunities: national

+ Increasing interest in appealing mixed-use downtowns

- Millennials have a stronger affinity to compact, walkable than any other generation surveyed.
- These same qualities support aging in place of Empty Nesters and older generations.

Millennial living preferences



Source: National Association of Realtors

Economic trends and opportunities: national

- + Increasing interest in appealing mixed-use downtowns
- + Demand for downtown leisure, cultural, and entertainment programming



Jacob Burns Film Center, Pleasantville, NY

Economic trends and opportunities: national

- + Increasing interest in appealing mixed-use downtowns
- + Demand for downtown leisure, cultural, and entertainment programming
- + Americans want to live in places that promote good health
 - 87%: healthy environment
 - 55%: green space



Above: Hook Mountain
Source: Urban Land Institute.

Economic trends and opportunities: national

- + Increasing interest in appealing mixed-use downtowns
- + Demand for downtown leisure, cultural, and entertainment programming
- + Americans want to live in places that promote good health
- + Telework has doubled since 2005



Economic trends and opportunities: regional

+ Hudson Valley jobs trends

- Health care will remain key driver: 25% jobs growth to 2022.
- Rockland: losses in manufacturing, gains in public administration and hospitality since 2007
- Mismatch between jobs and skill sets in Rockland County



Economic trends and opportunities: regional

- + Hudson Valley jobs trends
- + Planned BRT investments
 - Better connection to job centers
 - Increased market appeal of Nyack
 - An impressive “front door,” not a back alley.



Economic trends and opportunities: regional

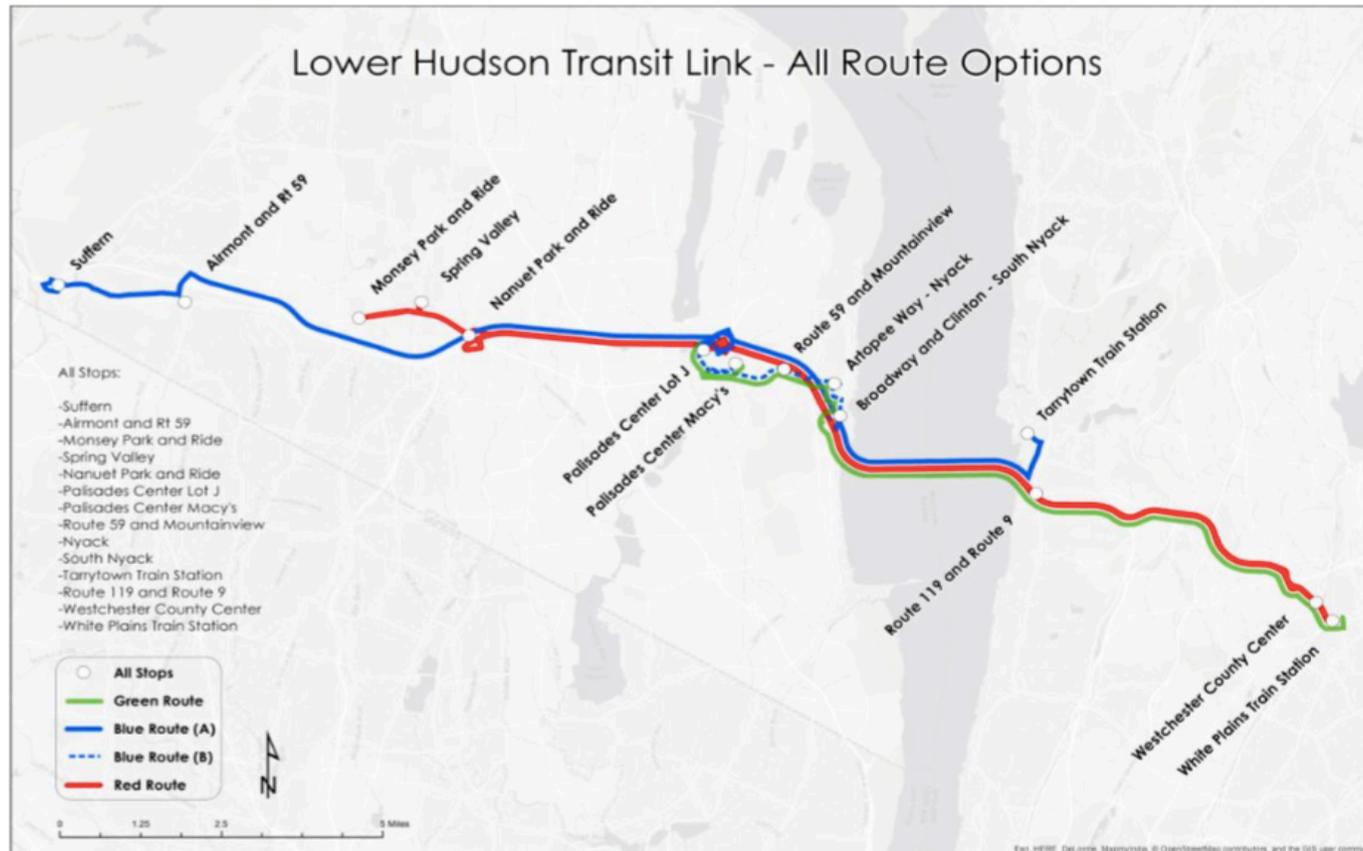
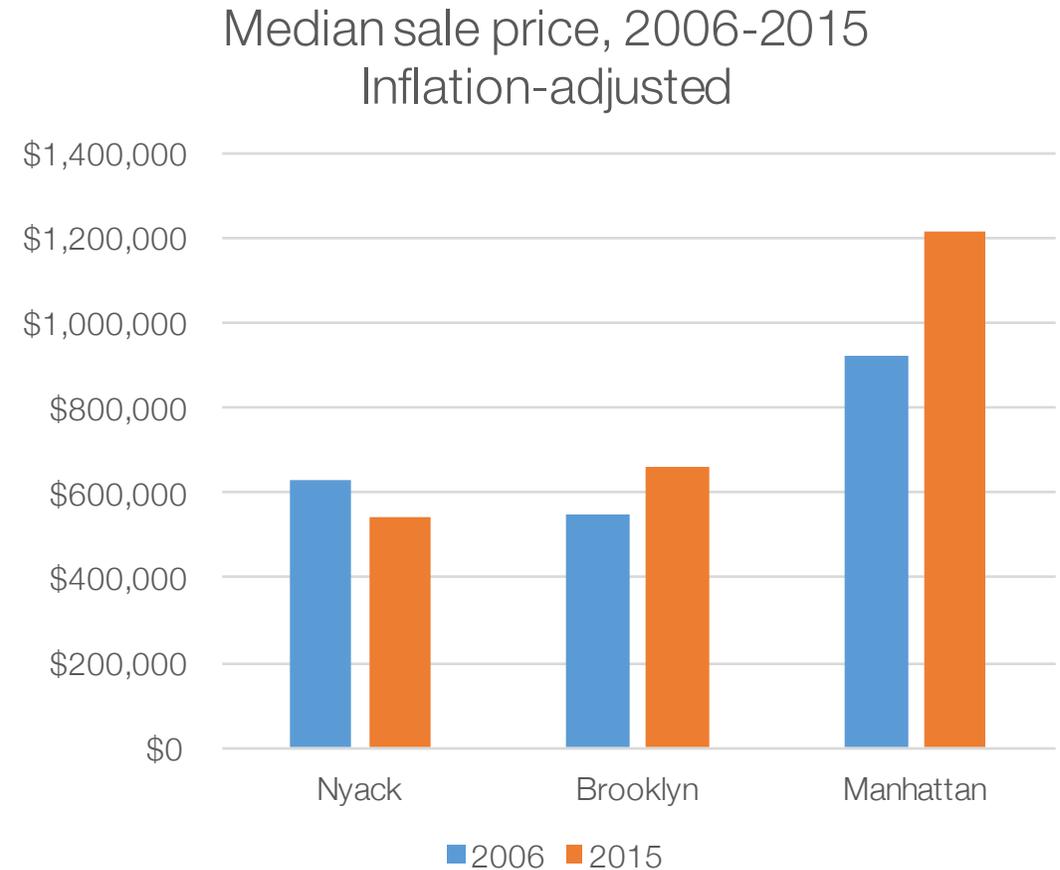


Figure 2: Draft proposed route optimizations for the future BRT service

Economic trends and opportunities: regional

- + Hudson Valley jobs trends
- + Planned BRT investments
- + Escalating NYC housing costs
 - Manhattan: +31% since '06
 - Brooklyn: +21% since '06
 - Nyack: -14% since '06



Source: Trulia

Economic trends and opportunities: regional

- + Hudson Valley jobs trends
- + Planned BRT investments
- + Escalating NYC housing costs
- + Increasing broad-based recognition of the Hudson Valley as a destination for living, tourism, culture, boating

FASHION & STYLE

The New York Times

Creating Hipsturbia

By ALEX WILLIAMS FEB. 15, 2013



Ryan Inzana

Economic trends and opportunities: regional

- + Hudson Valley jobs trends
- + Planned BRT investments
- + Escalating NYC housing costs
- + Increasing broad-based recognition of the Hudson Valley as a destination for living, tourism, culture, boating
- + Increasing ferry operator interest in Hudson Valley waterfront towns



Economic trends and opportunities: local

- + Strong local interest in living and working in the same community
- + Strength in health care
- + A new, quality hotel is opening at the gateway to downtown.
- + Village has significant ownership of waterfront and Superblock

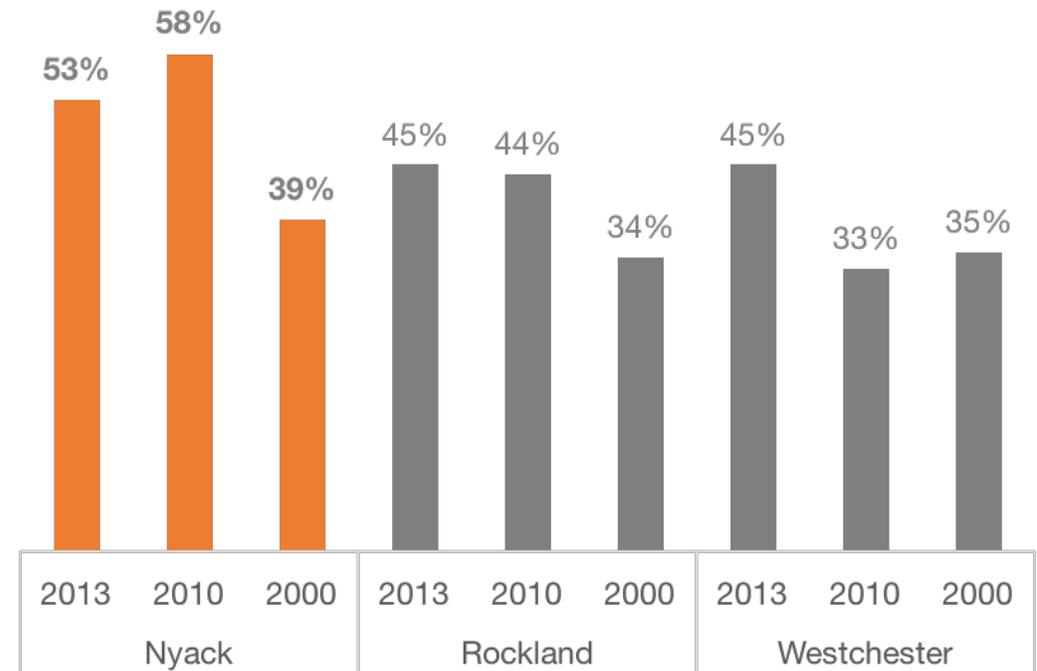


Issues in Nyack

+ Challenges for residents

- Taxes
- Housing cost burden
- Access to jobs

% of housing cost-burdened households
Nyack, Rockland, Westchester: 2000-2013



Source: US Census Bureau

Issues in Nyack

- + Challenges for residents
- + Challenges for businesses
 - Taxes
 - Commercial rents
 - Regulatory barriers to startup
 - Limited customer base for downtown merchants
 - Limited commercial office stock



Issues in Nyack

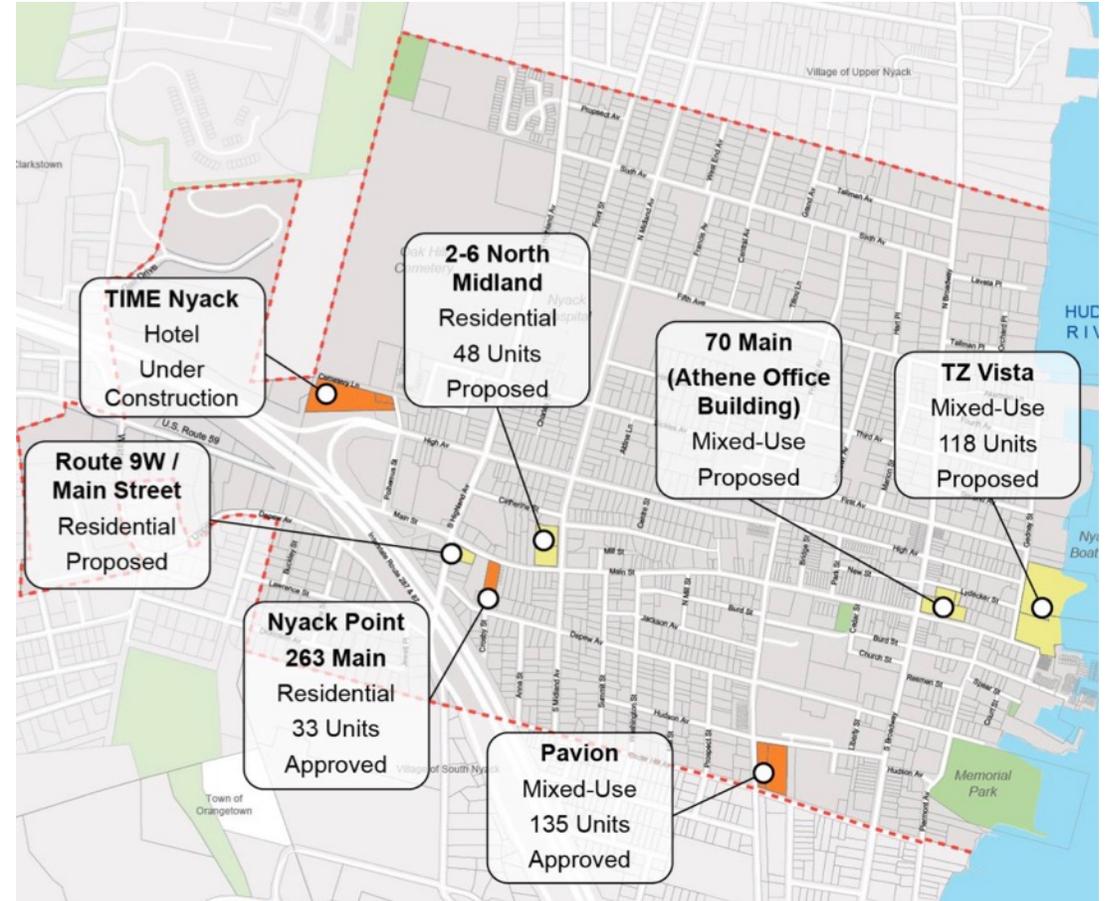
- + Challenges for residents
- + Challenges for businesses
- + An historic center with a few missing pieces
 - A Hudson River waterfront that hasn't reached its full potential
 - Underperforming downtown district
 - Weak connection between waterfront and downtown



Above: Traditional Main Street storefronts (left) and the Superblock retail development (right).

Issues in Nyack

- + Challenges for residents
- + Challenges for businesses
- + An historic center with a few missing pieces
- + Development-based challenges
 - Continued interest
 - Preserving community character
 - Maximizing public value



Policy recommendations

Economic development approach

Focus areas: Waterfront, Downtown, Gateway

Economic development approach

- + Increase access to job opportunities.
 - Improve BRT and intermodal transit connections
 - Build an appealing transit station
 - Advocate for capacity increase on I-287 and TZ Bridge.
 - Explore ferry transit connections



Economic development approach

- + Increase access to job opportunities.
- + Expand village economy.
 - More local jobs and services



Commercial and light manufacturing thoughtfully incorporated into existing historic fabric (Seattle, WA).

Economic development approach

- + Increase access to job opportunities.
- + Expand village economy.
- + Strengthen sense of place.
 - Biggest competitive advantage
 - Walkable mixed-use destination with value for Village, Nyacks, and region
 - Potential for civic waterfront
 - Arts and culture orientation
 - A unique user experience



Economic development approach

- + Increase access to job opportunities.
- + Expand village economy.
- + Strengthen sense of place.
- + Reduce housing cost burden.
 - New mixed-income requirements



Economic development approach

- + Increase access to job opportunities.
- + Expand village economy.
- + Strengthen sense of place.
- + Reduce housing cost burden.
- + Three focus areas
 - Waterfront
 - Downtown
 - Gateway



Focus area: Waterfront

- + The riverfront is one of the Village's best assets
 - Leverage this by choreographing the user experience



Focus area: Waterfront

- + The riverfront is one of the Village's best assets
- + More public, more civic
 - One unified experience
 - Activity loops
 - People, not cars
 - Unlock greater public benefit
 - Draw NYC and regional visitor by ferry



Focus area: Waterfront



Focus area: Waterfront

- + The riverfront is one of the Village's best assets
- + More public, more civic
- + Limited, sensitive development can help fund civic places



Above: The Tarrytown waterfront.

Focus area: Waterfront

- + The riverfront is one of the village's best assets
- + More public, more civic
- + Limited, sensitive development funds civic places
- + A high-quality concession
 - Select the right concessionaire



Above: The former River Club restaurant space.

Focus area: Waterfront

- + The riverfront is one of the Village's best assets
- + More public, more civic
- + Limited, sensitive development funds civic places
- + A high-quality concession
 - Select the right operator
 - Structure to return O&M funding



Aerial view of proposed design for Water Works Park in Minneapolis, with year-round concession building near top.

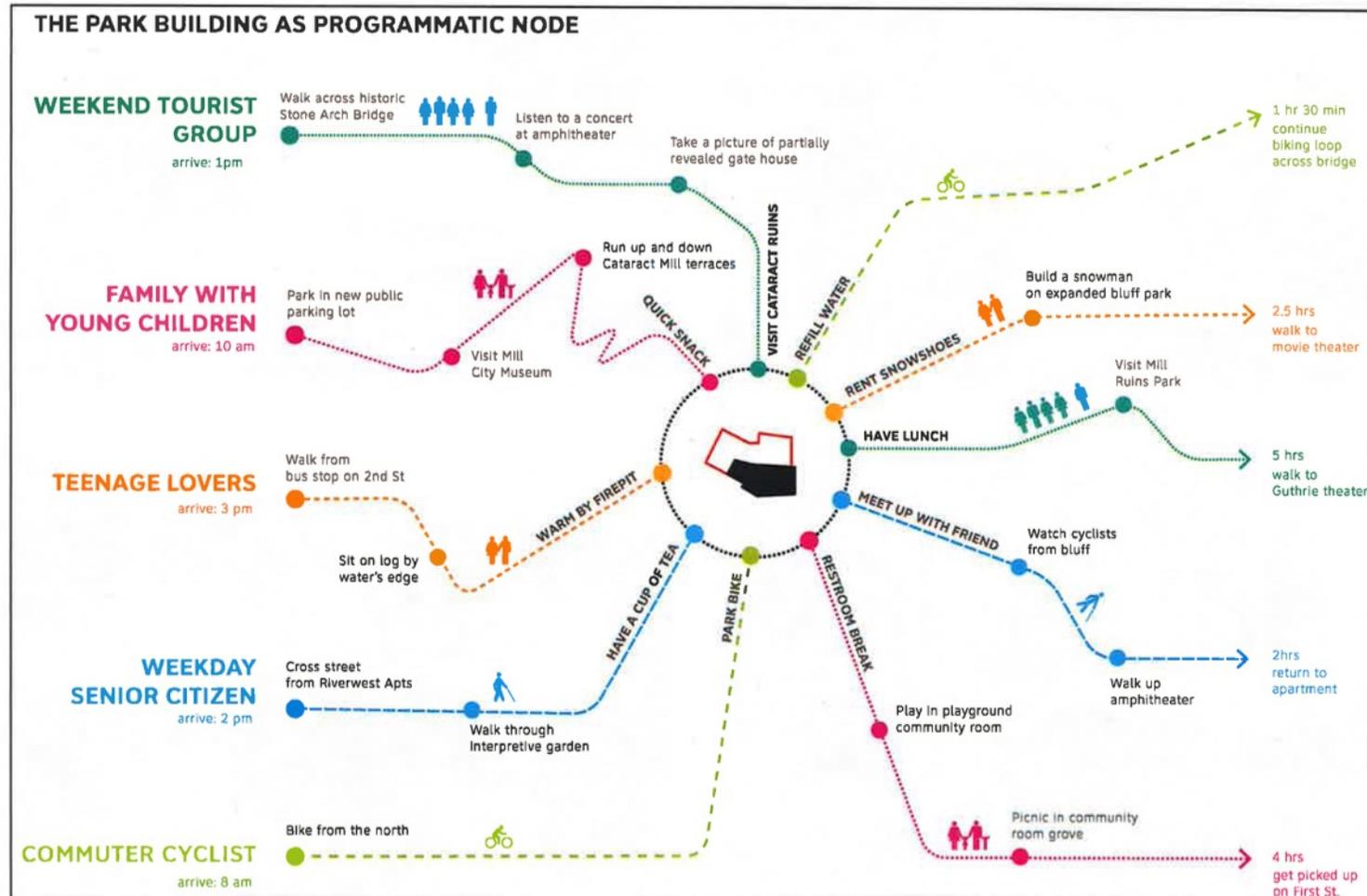
Focus area: Waterfront

- + The riverfront is one of the Village's best assets
- + More public, more civic
- + Limited, sensitive development funds civic places
- + A high-quality concession
 - Select the right operator
 - Structure to return O&M funding
 - Acts as hub for activity



Winter view of proposed park building and concession at Water Works Park, Minneapolis central riverfront.

Focus area: Waterfront



Focus area: Waterfront



Grand Banks, Hudson River Park, NYC



Frying Pan, Hudson River Park, NYC

Focus area: Waterfront



Brooklyn Bridge Garden Bar, Brooklyn Bridge Park



Terroir, High Line, NYC

Focus area: Waterfront



La Marina, Fort Washington Park, NYC



X20, Yonkers

Focus area: Waterfront



Pier 701, Piermont



Shadows on the Hudson, Poughkeepsie

Focus area: Downtown

+ What does downtown need?

- More visitors, more hours of the day, every day
- A more diversified merchant mix
- Clearer wayfinding, including for parking
- Stronger connection to waterfront district
- A destination anchor use or public place
- More resources for downtown businesses



Focus area: Downtown

+ A new destination to strengthen downtown

- Village stakeholders endorsed a redevelopment approach for Superblock in 2011
- Thicken program to create new economic value
- Reconsider parking



Jacob Burns Film Center, Pleasantville, NY

Focus area: Downtown

- + A new destination to strengthen downtown
- + New housing choices
 - Mixed-income
 - Density to support diversified retail and services mix
 - Building heights that respect historic context
 - The most transit-oriented location



Patchogue, NY

Focus area: Downtown

- + A new destination to strengthen downtown
- + New housing choices
- + New ground-floor retail



Ground floor retail and upper floor residential puts more foot traffic on the street and affordable housing options at the village core.

Focus area: Downtown

- + A new destination to strengthen downtown
- + New housing choices
- + New ground-floor retail
- + Greater access to economic opportunity
 - Identify locations for education, job training, greater local employment



Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center, Brooklyn

Focus area: Downtown

- + A new destination to strengthen downtown
- + New housing choices
- + New ground-floor retail
- + Greater access to economic opportunity
- + An attractive BRT center that acts as a front door to the village.



Focus area: Downtown

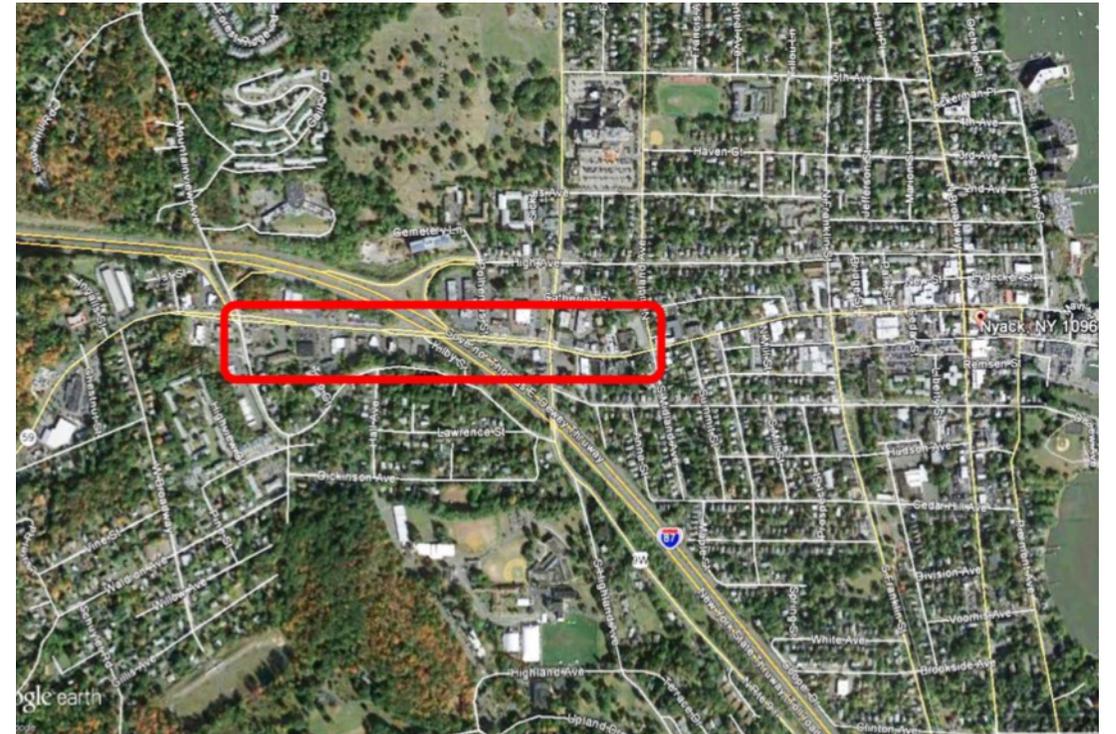
- + A new destination to strengthen downtown
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- + An attractive BRT center that acts as a front door to the village.
- + More resources for downtown businesses



Focus area: Gateway

+ An important complement to downtown

- Certain auto-oriented uses should remain
- Entrance experience to village



Focus area: Gateway

+ An important complement to downtown

- Certain auto-oriented uses should remain
- Entrance experience to village



Focus area: Gateway

+ An important complement to downtown

- Certain auto-oriented uses should remain
- Entrance experience to village



Focus area: Gateway

- + An important complement to downtown
- + Leverage hotel investment
 - A new, higher bar for design
 - Elevate the visitor's first impression of Nyack



Focus area: Gateway

- + An important complement to downtown
- + Leverage hotel investment
- + Relationship to adjacent residential neighborhood
 - Affordable housing
 - Bus stop and school
 - Make safer, more attractive



Focus area: Gateway



Route 59: An uncomfortable and unwelcoming environment.

Focus area: Gateway

- + An important complement to downtown
- + Leverage hotel investment
- + Relationship to adjacent residential neighborhood
- + A higher quality public realm
 - Landscaping and sidewalks
 - Consistency in built fabric
 - Public art
 - New job-generating uses



Focus area: Gateway

- + An important complement to downtown
- + Leverage hotel investment
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 - New job-generating uses



Detail of a Chris Stain mural in DUMBO, Brooklyn, depicting industrial workers from the neighborhood's past.

Focus area: Gateway



A Yoko Shimizu mural under the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway in Brooklyn, commissioned by the local BID, becomes a “must-selfie” attraction.

Focus area: Gateway

- + An important complement to downtown
- + Leverage hotel investment
- + Relationship to adjacent residential neighborhood
- + A higher quality public realm
 - Landscaping and sidewalks
 - Consistency in built fabric
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Overview of Roundtable Discussions

Economic Development

- Each table covers the range of economic development issues including:
 - Overall economic goals and objectives
 - Growth and preservation priorities
 - Shopping in Nyack
 - Waterfront dining
 - Economic development program approaches
- Large-scale maps can be used for reference and to mark-up with comments, issues, potential recommendations
- Need a volunteer to report back at the end of the session and summarize major concepts/themes discussed at their station



For More Information:

Sign in to get on the email list

Visit the Village of Nyack website for updates:

<http://nyack-ny.gov/project/2015-comprehensive-plan-update/>

Attend future public workshops and meetings

The last workshop will be held on May 18 at Village Hall.

Email questions and comments to:

dougfoster@nyack-ny.gov