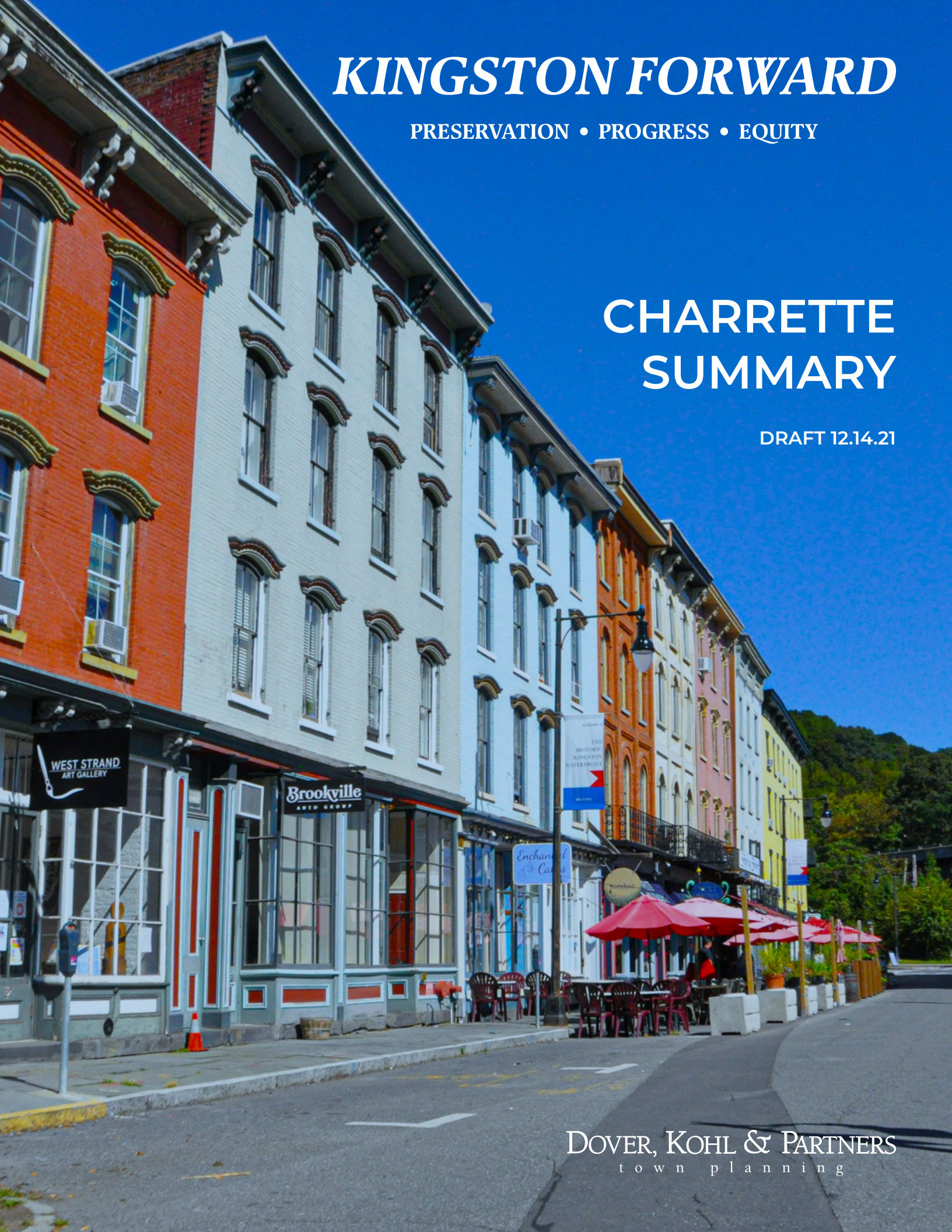


KINGSTON FORWARD

PRESERVATION • PROGRESS • EQUITY

CHARRETTE SUMMARY

DRAFT 12.14.21



DOVER, KOHL & PARTNERS
town planning



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PLANNING TEAM

DOVER, KOHL & PARTNERS
town planning, urban design & form-based code

LABERGE GROUP
land use planning / GEIS

LAND USE LAW CENTER
code integration

HALL PLANNING & ENGINEERING
multimodal street design standards

GRIDICS
code testing & online platform



WHAT IS A CHARRETTE?

A charrette is an intensive, multi-day, collaborative planning event that harnesses the talents and energies of all affected parties to create and support a feasible plan or vision. The Kingston Forward charrette engaged the community in describing the desired form and character for future improvements and preservation throughout the City.

INTRODUCTION

Kingston Forward is the City of Kingston’s initiative to replace its existing zoning ordinance with new standards that support **preservation** of treasured resources, continued improvement and **progress**, and increased **equity**. From November 4–10, 2021, a planning charrette was held to launch community engagement; this report summarizes that process and input from community participants.

A city’s zoning ordinance specifies rules for new and existing buildings, such as where buildings can be built, how tall they can be and where they are placed on their lot, what kind of activities take place within them, and how much parking is required. Having the right standards in place impacts many aspects of daily life, including housing availability, how one chooses to move through the city (walking, biking, or driving), and where businesses, jobs and recreation opportunities are located.

The City of Kingston’s existing zoning ordinance dates from the 1960s; it has been amended in a piecemeal fashion over the years and it can be confusing and unclear. The existing zoning does not align with Kingston’s historic town-building tradition, and it has not been aligned to meet current community needs and values. Many existing buildings would not be allowed to be built today under rules for minimum lot size, building height and permitted mix of uses. Zoning rules could be better written to realize community goals for walkable streets, sustainability and affordable housing.

A FORM-BASED APPROACH

The City plans to replace the existing zoning with a Form-Based Code (FBC). A Form-Based Code focuses primarily on the physical form of development and can be used to implement a desired community vision. Form-Based Codes make development more predictable, promote better design, and are simpler, so it is easier for people to use the code and understand what it allows.

Regulating urban form is not new; the concept dates to the 1600s when the Law of the Indies guided the development of Spanish colonies by specifying the dimensions for blocks and the position of public spaces. In 1916, the original New York City zoning ordinance specified setbacks for new towers rising in Manhattan to help light and fresh air reach the streets. These rules were in place until the mid 1960s, resulting in the very recognizable forms from the heyday of the American Skyscraper Style.

Originally, zoning was established to require industry to be separated from homes because of the health impacts from pollution. Eventually, the idea was taken much further, to excluding multifamily buildings from areas selected for single-family homes, excluding shops from residential neighborhoods, and more. As cars became the dominant form of mobility, cities started reshaping themselves – spreading out, and separating uses even more. Over



time, zoning often became an instrument for keeping cities segregated by income, race, and age. Current research and writings document this, and points to the need to rethink the system to produce greater equity and opportunity.

Part of the problem with conventional zoning is that regulating by land uses is a crude tool for getting the city you want. Design – or *form*– matters a lot.

In conventional use-based zoning (like Kingston’s existing code), the city is divided by land use: residential, commercial, office, etc. A list of use zones becomes the basis for the table of contents, and the commercial building rules are in one section, the residential rules are in another, and so on. Little priority and detail is given to design and form. “Floor area ratio” is included to limit building bulk, but this abstract metric can result in a number of different building designs and doesn’t provide consistency in what sort of neighborhood will result.

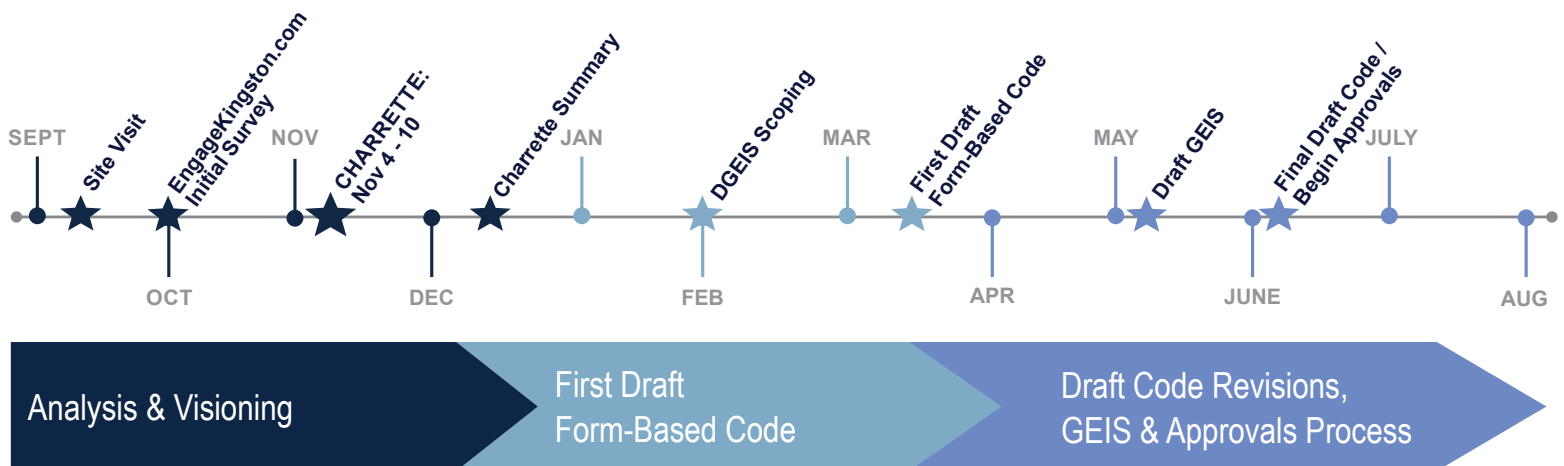
In a Form-Based Code, the rules are organized according to place. One section shows how to design a building on a main street, another requirements for a building on a quiet neighborhood street. Uses are still regulated, but

more flexibility is built into the code, and the rules are based on the context – the kind of place you are trying to create – not just the use.

The City of Kingston was founded long before the existing zoning code was established. The existing building-to-street relationships, the mix of housing types and uses, and the neighborly ways of designing buildings with porches and stoops that bring people to the street scene, are like a textbook on the design of beautiful, livable cities. A form-based code can shape future development based on analysis of the best parts of the existing city form, so that future buildings follow these time-honored design approaches.

A CRITICAL MOMENT

This rezoning initiative is a critical moment in the history of Kingston, an opportunity to define the form and character of the city, to shape future growth and preservation by setting clearly defined standards. The purpose of the Kingston Forward charrette was to begin a community dialogue that will continue as the code is drafted over the next year. Public input during this time is essential so that the code will reflect a shared community vision.



Preliminary project timeline

PRE-CHARRETTE ACTIVITIES

The Kingston Forward planning process was launched in August 2021. To prepare for the November charrette, the planning team assisted the City with community outreach, came to Kingston for an initial site visit to meet with City staff and community stakeholders, assembled base maps, and began to analyze the existing urban form and characteristics of Kingston's neighborhoods.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Public outreach is vital to creating a code that addresses the needs and desires of the community. The planning team and City worked together to create a schedule for the charrette that would include multiple opportunities for community members to be involved, at in-person and virtual events, during weekdays and over the weekend, and at different times of the day. Meetings were advertised with bi-lingual posters, flyers, radio ads, and social media posts. An initial survey was created to get community members thinking about urban form (see pages 8-11). Survey topics included residential neighborhoods, mix of uses, street design, and desired outcomes for Kingston. The survey was available online at engagekingston.com; paper copies of the survey were available at the Kingston Library and City Hall. Community

volunteers assisted with outreach, handing out surveys and flyers to a variety of local businesses and at local events. Planning team members also participated in public meetings with City boards and commissions in the leadup to the charrette, including the Conservation Advisory Council, Kingston Land Trust, and the Live Well Kingston Commission, to answer questions about the project and explain how people could get involved.

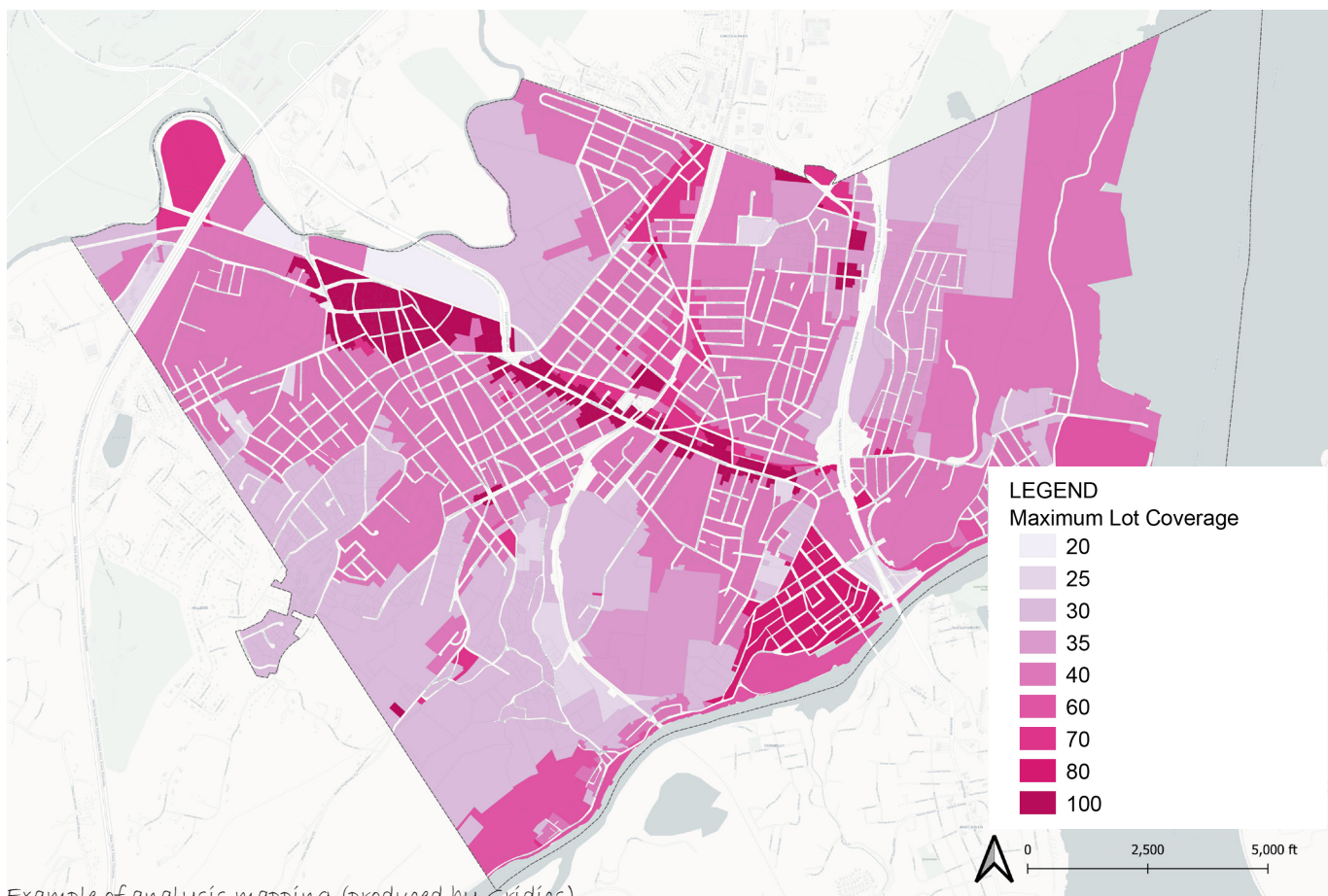
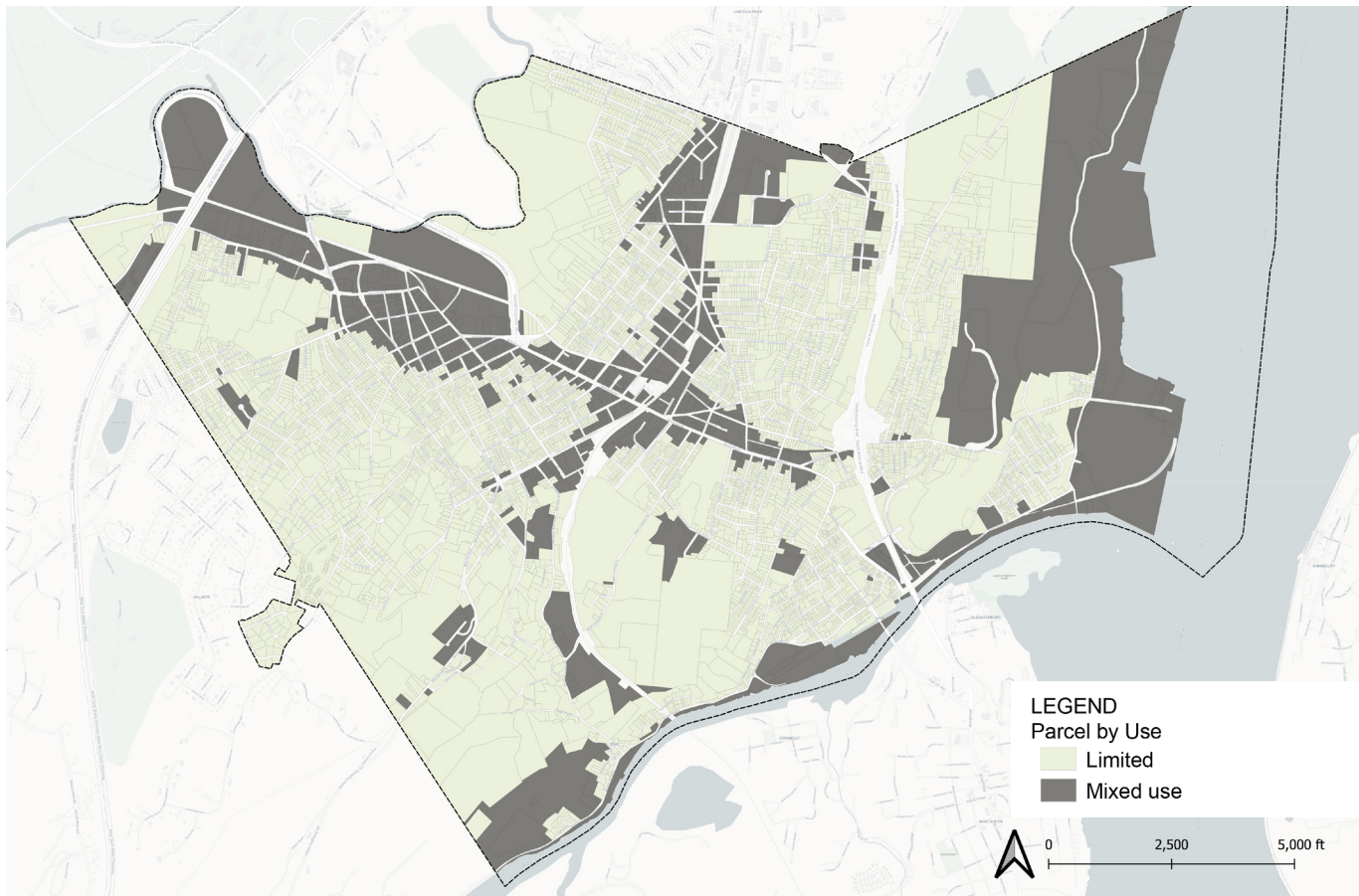
SITE VISIT

The planning team conducted a site visit on September 20th and 21st to assess current conditions and to participate in initial stakeholder meetings. During this visit, the team toured city neighborhoods, taking photos and measurements of existing conditions. Walking and driving tours were led by community leaders and City staff who identified ideas and concerns that had been previously cited, to brief the team about key issues. The team also held initial stakeholder meetings with City Council members, community activists, and city and county staff, to learn more about relevant opportunities and concerns, and refine the charrette schedule and outreach strategy. The site visit provided context for the team to begin a more extensive analysis of existing conditions.



Site Visit Walking Tours





Example of analysis mapping (produced by Gridios)

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

The first step in a planning process like this one is to do a lot of listening. This includes listening to community input, but also studying and listening to the data. In the weeks prior to the charrette, the planning team assembled a series of analysis maps to locate natural constraints such as topography, flood zones and terrestrial corridors; as well as patterns in the urban form such as lot sizes, building footprints and intensity, park locations, and street and trail networks.

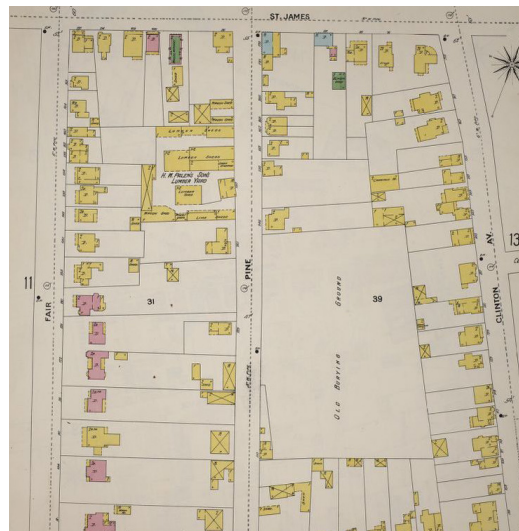
The team visualized the existing zoning regulations by mapping the required front setback and maximum lot coverage, permitted building height, and areas that permit a mix of uses. The team also mapped all of the parcels where the existing zoning would not allow a new building to be constructed by right, because either the lot size does not meet minimum requirements for the district where it is located, or a new building is not feasible once minimum setbacks are applied.

On-site measurements through synoptic surveys (see more detail, right) and a study of historic maps added to the team's understanding of built form. The analysis was collected and displayed during the charrette, to spark community conversations and advance ideas for the code.



SYNOPTIC SURVEY

As part of the preliminary analysis, the DK&P team went into Kingston's neighborhoods, measuring and documenting details of the built environment (setbacks, street width, etc), looking for the patterns that reflect each neighborhoods' sense of place. This "synoptic survey" technique helps to identify what details and dimensions existing city streets and buildings have in common. This documentation can be used as the form-based code is drafted, to identify what dimensions new buildings should use to make them a good match with their neighbors.



Example Sanborn Maps for Kingston showing Broadway in Rondout (left) and Pine Street (right). Originally published by The Sanborn Map Company in the 19th and 20th centuries, the maps were created to allow fire insurance companies to assess their total liability in urbanized areas of the United States. Today, these maps are a great resource to understand historic urban form.



INITIAL SURVEY

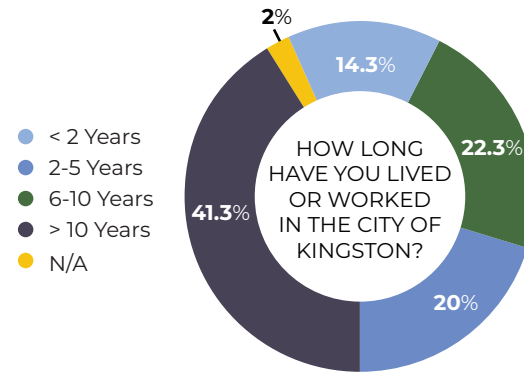
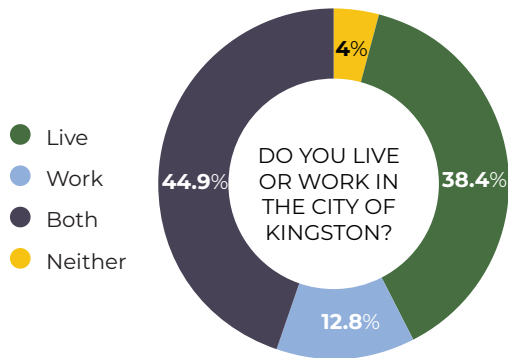
RESULTS FROM ONLINE & IN-PERSON SURVEY
CONDUCTED OCTOBER 1 TO NOVEMBER 14, 2021

556

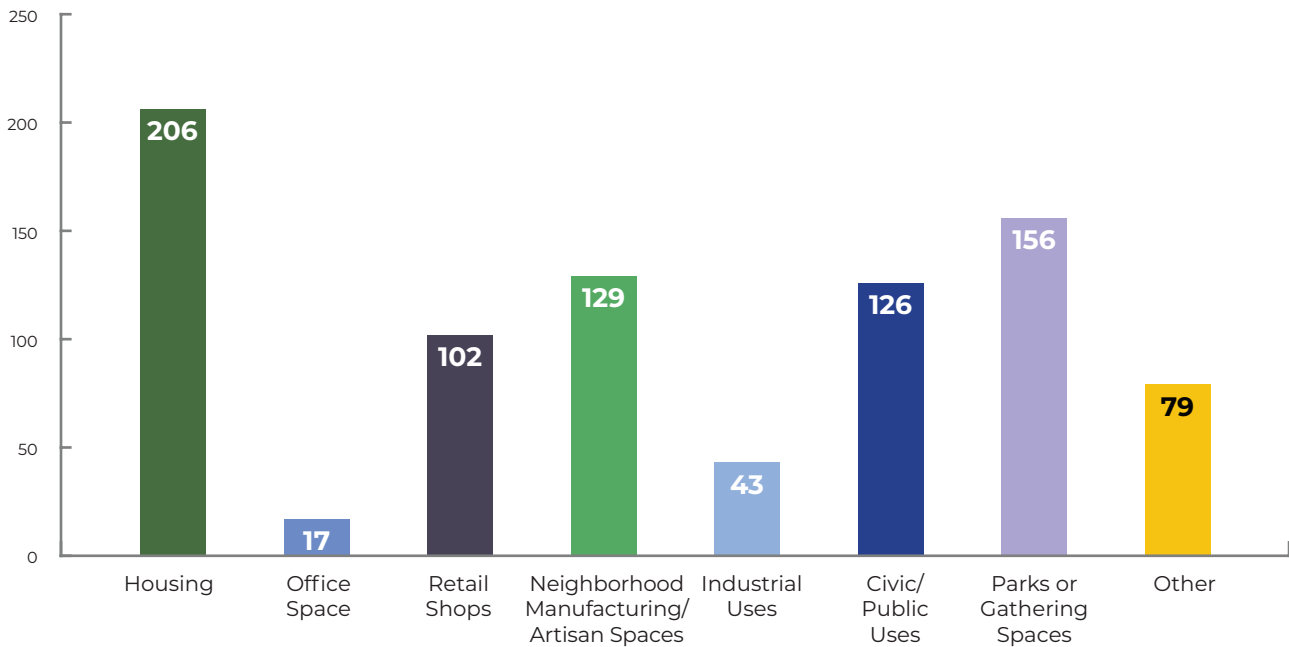
VISITORS

308

RESPONSES

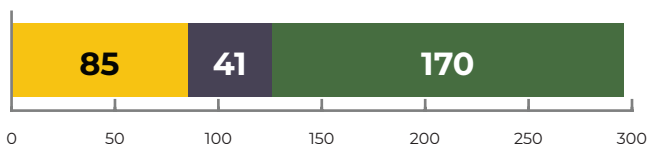


I THINK KINGSTON NEEDS MORE...

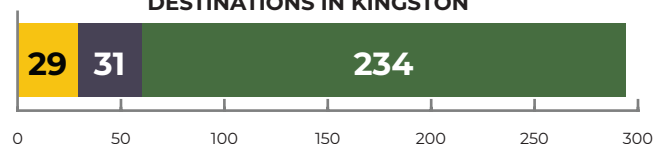


MIX OF USES + NEIGHBORHOOD FORM

SHOULD KINGSTON GROW?



I WANT TO LIVE WALKING DISTANCE TO SHOPS OR OTHER DESTINATIONS IN KINGSTON



● Not Sure ● No ● Yes

HOW INTERESTED ARE YOU ABOUT THE FOLLOWING TOPICS THAT IMPACT THE CITY'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE?

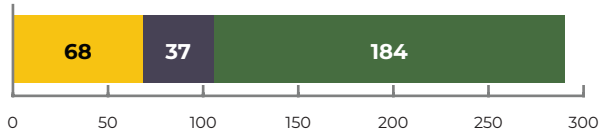


Very Uninterested Uninterested Neutral Somewhat Interested Very Interested



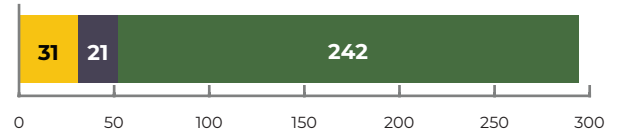
RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (“GRANNY FLATS”, TYPICALLY AROUND 400 SQUARE FEET) SHOULD BE ALLOWED IN MORE PARTS OF THE CITY

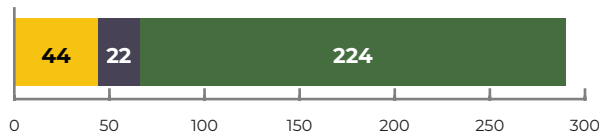


● Not Sure ● No ● Yes

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS SHOULD ALSO ALLOW CORNER STORES, SMALL OFFICES, PORCH CAFÉS AND OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD-SCALE USES

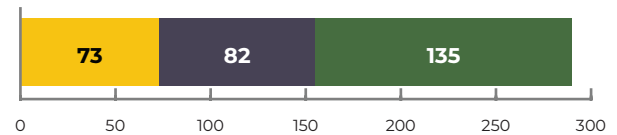


SHOULD THERE BE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY (I.E., RESIDENTIAL USES IN LIGHT INDUSTRIAL OR COMMERCIAL AREAS)?

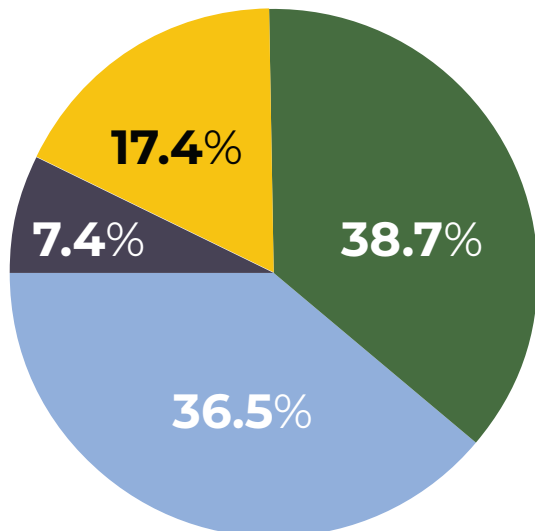


● Not Sure ● No ● Yes

SHOULD IT BE OKAY FOR BUILDINGS TO INCLUDE MORE UNITS OR BE TALLER IF THEY ARE CREATING AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

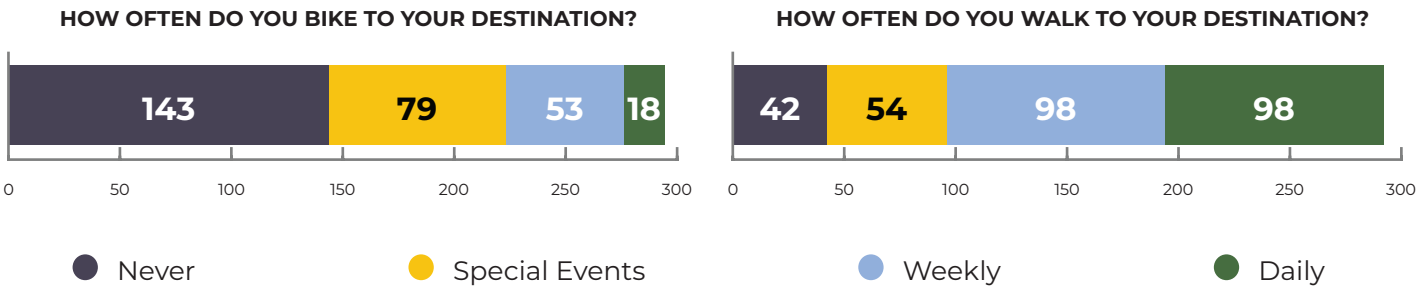


DUPLEXES, TRIPLEXES, FOUR-PLEXES SHOULD...

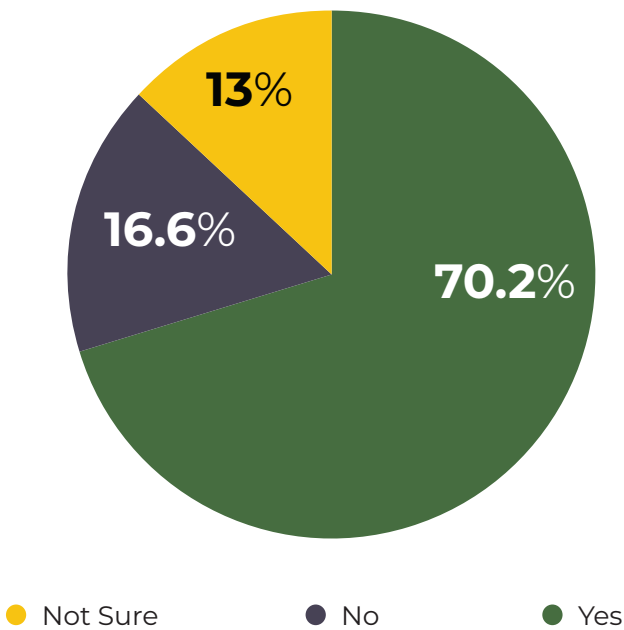


- Be prohibited in most residential neighborhoods (should be single family only)
- Duplexes should be allowed in some or most neighborhoods, but not triplexes and four-plexes
- Be allowed in some residential neighborhoods (for example, near commercial areas)
- Be allowed in most residential neighborhoods

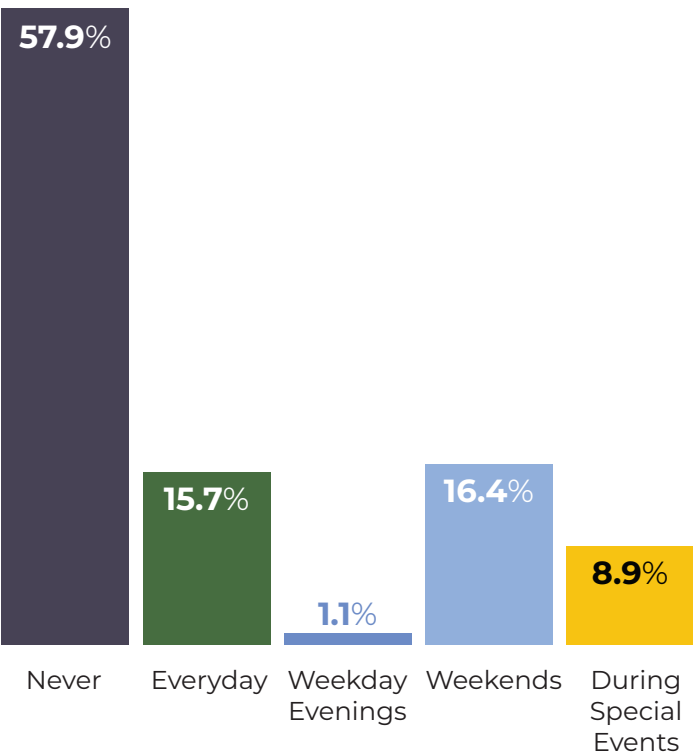
TRANSPORTATION + STREETS



WOULD YOU WALK, BIKE, OR USE TRANSIT MORE OFTEN IF THERE WAS IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE?



A LACK OF PARKING PREVENTS ME FROM SHOPPING/DINING AS OFTEN AS I WANT TO:





CHARRETTE RECAP

CHARRETTE SCHEDULE



386+
Total
Participants

A charrette is a multi-day public engagement process designed to collect input and establish a community vision. The process is highly collaborative, where members of the planning team are able to directly interact with the community in a variety of meeting formats and events to identify priorities and test ideas.

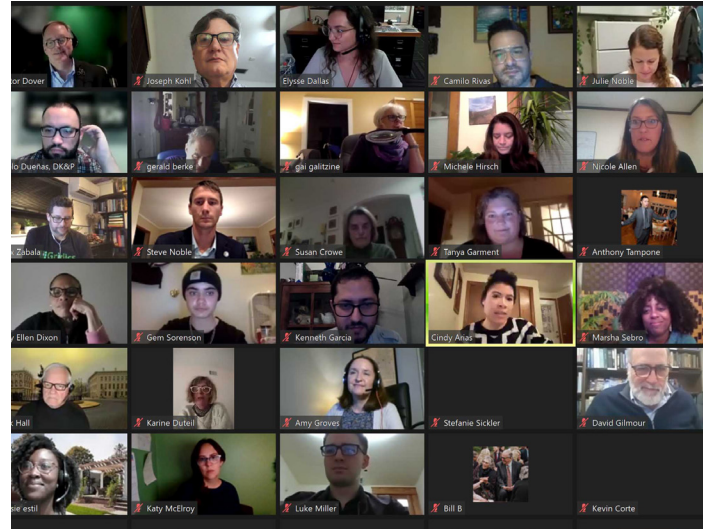
The Kingston Forward charrette included virtual and in-person kick-off meetings, walking tours, open studio hours and stakeholder meetings. During hands-on input sessions, participants were able to draw on maps, to brainstorm in small groups and mark their ideas. A work-in-progress presentation gave a summary of what the planning team has been hearing so far, and included initial sketches to help visualize ideas.

The charrette provided a foundation of information and citizen input for the planning team to begin work on the form-based code. As the code is drafted, the planning team will continue to test sample sites, and will return to Kingston for additional meetings to gather feedback. The events of the charrette and key takeaways from each event are summarized on the following pages.

KICK-OFF & HANDS-ON INPUT SESSION

To start off the charrette week, the planning team held Kick-off and Hands-on Input Sessions. A virtual meeting was held on Thursday, November 4th; and an in-person meeting was held on Friday, November 5th at City Hall Council Chambers. There were 78 attendees at the kick-off meetings, plus members of the planning team.

Both sessions began with a presentation explaining the purpose of the project, results from the initial analysis, and some of the input the planning team had been hearing to date. After the presentation, participants were separated into small groups to discuss ideas with a facilitator from the planning team. Facilitators asked participants questions about Kingston and its neighborhoods to identify areas of opportunity and concerns. At the end of their discussion, each of the groups defined “three big ideas” that summarized the most important points from their conversations. One community member from each group then presented their big ideas to the larger assembly. Participants were able to hear many common themes among multiple groups, and some new ideas that they had not been thinking about.



Virtual & In-person Kick-off and Hands-on Input Sessions



BIG IDEAS SUMMARY

COMMUNITY IDEAS FROM VIRTUAL HANDS-ON SESSION (THURSDAY NOVEMBER 4)

Group 1:

- Vibrant and diverse places / neighborhoods
- Support local businesses / community focused uses
- Better design / celebrate local character

Group 2:

- Walkability, bikeability, less car-centric, more people-centric. Reclaim streets for pedestrians
- More small businesses, no big chains or at least restricted that must comply
- Greenspace, eco-housing, pollination gardens, Special Natural Area District (SNAD), prettier landscape

Group 3:

- Sidewalks (remove hazards, create play streets, connect to transit)
- ADUs, cottage industry retail/commercial spaces in single-family areas
- Urban agriculture

Group 4:

- More commercial within 5 minutes of every neighborhood.
- More public transport
- Maintain the bluestone (preserve the bluestone areas)

Group 5:

- Street design
- Traditional fabric/business development in residential neighborhood, walkability
- Traffic / Parking Requirements & Safety

At the conclusion of the Hands-on Input Session, participants summarized their conversations into “THREE BIG IDEAS”. The top ideas from each group are listed on these pages.

Group 6:

- Effective utilization of space, more small scale retail
- Improve public transportation: more reliable, feel safer, more walkable areas
- Increase tree coverage, improve waterfront access and recreation

Group 7:

- Midtown Opportunity Area (existing warehouse uses): greener, adaptive reuse
- Train: Improving crossings, decrease nuisance (noise, time, congestion)
- Uptown Opportunity Area by Esopus Creek: new mixed-use development & improved access to creek and trail

Group 9:

- Revitalize Broadway corridor
- Respecting historic nature of the city - bluestone
- Affordable housing, ADUs

Group 10:

- Business enhancements & mix of uses
- Co-Housing / more housing choices
- Parks, playground, access to openspace

COMMUNITY IDEAS FROM IN-PERSON HANDS-ON SESSION (FRIDAY NOVEMBER 5)

Group 1:

- Building and preserving low-income & affordable housing
- Protect the watershed & viewshed by preventing development on the waterfront
- Remove barriers to non-traditional housing options

Group 3:

- Encouraging new/greater density and mixed use
- Improving pedestrian connectivity
- More historic districts

Group 5:

- Signage, way finding, branding, gateways
- Access to amenities especially green space
- Stitching Rondout together

Group 7:

- More input from diverse community members
- Street and building design with pedestrian priorities
- Affordable housing

Group 10:

- Pedestrian friendly
- Connecting Midtown and Uptown
- Maximizing residential space

Group 12:

- Safe streets for all
- Potential mixed-use zones for positive affordable housing
- Intersection management



Participants share their table's THREE BIG IDEAS at the Hands-on Input Session

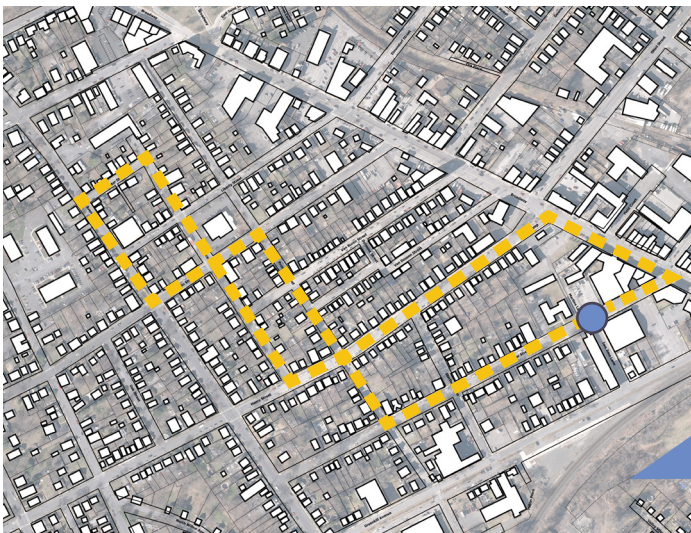


WALKING TOURS

On Saturday November 6 and Sunday November 7, walking tours were held in Midtown, Uptown, Wilbur, Ponckhockie and Rondout. All of the tours were open to interested members of the public and led by citizen volunteers. Over 80 community members participated.

The tours were an opportunity for the planning team and community participants to walk together, to learn more about each neighborhood and how it has evolved over time, and for community members to share their vision for the future. Participants observed the built environment, noting the existing building setbacks and heights, the types

of buildings and mix of uses, the design of streets and how comfortable it is to walk, the design and location of neighborhood parks and open spaces, and where parking is located. Along the tour participants could point out specific urban design issues or areas of opportunity and discuss with the planning team.



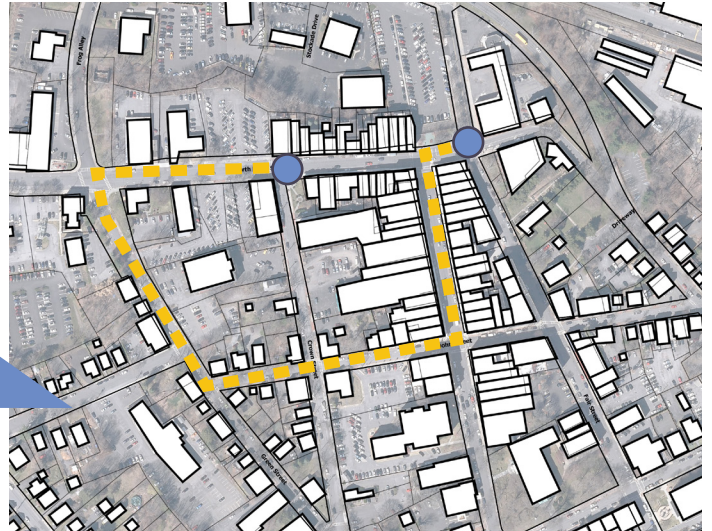
KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM MIDTOWN WALK:

- Vacant lots on Broadway are an opportunity for infill, which could include housing
- Displacement is a concern – affordable housing is key for the existing community to be able to remain
- Pedestrian/bike safety (particularly for kids) as well as street trees and bluestone sidewalks are key street design concerns
- Community input is essential. The walk was an opportunity to engage with additional community members on porches and sidewalks and let them know about the rezoning effort



KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM UPTOWN WALK:

- Uptown was the original settlement of Kingston. A variety of building types and materials (stone, brick, and wood siding) reflects the long history of the Stockade District
- Consistent setbacks, with buildings at the edge of the sidewalk define neighborhood form
- Many buildings do not have space for parking on their lot, and rely on street parking and public parking lots
- Key issues discussed were encouraging reuse of historic structures, supporting local business, and scale of future development





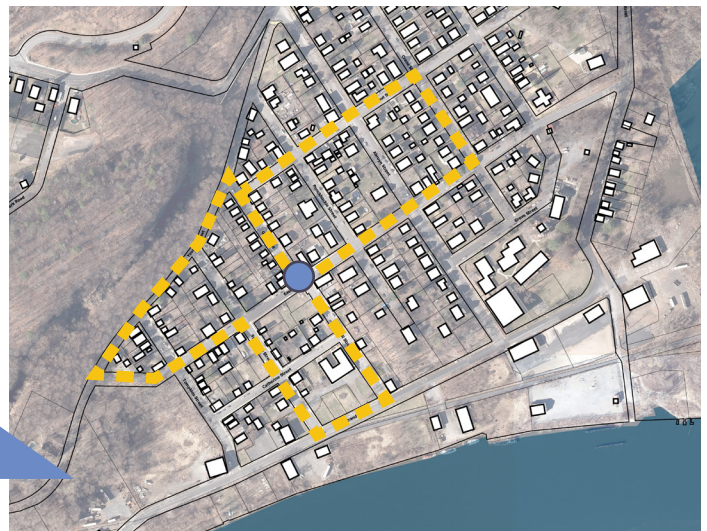
KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM WILBUR WALK:

- Pedestrian safety is a key concern, particularly the intersection of Wilbur Ave and Dunn St as well as all streets with missing, incomplete or damaged sidewalks. A pedestrian / bike connection to Rondout is desired
- Key issues discussed were sea level rise and flooding, as well as noise from the shipyard
- The community garden along Wilbur Avenue is the only public open space and is a source of civic pride
- Residents want to see the preservation of natural uplands surrounding Wilbur, which could include a trails network



KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM PONCKHOCKIE WALK:

- Affordability is a key concern – to make it feasible for existing community to remain intact
- There is a great variety of building types; many buildings do not conform to existing zoning standards
- Existing setbacks are shallower on the west (buildings are closer to the street); buildings with larger setbacks are on the eastern side of the neighborhood
- The waterfront includes vacant or underutilized land with potential for new water-oriented uses or housing; but there are concerns about gentrification and sea level rise



KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM RONDOUT WALK:

- This area saw the greatest impact from urban renewal in the 1960s; vacant and underutilized lands that remain today are an opportunity to stitch the neighborhood back together
- There is an opportunity to bring more activity to upper Broadway near Spring Street with reuse of vacant land; nearby parking to serve businesses will be important
- There is a great variety of building types throughout the historic neighborhood
- Key issues discussed were scale of future development, walkable street design, and neighborhood open space





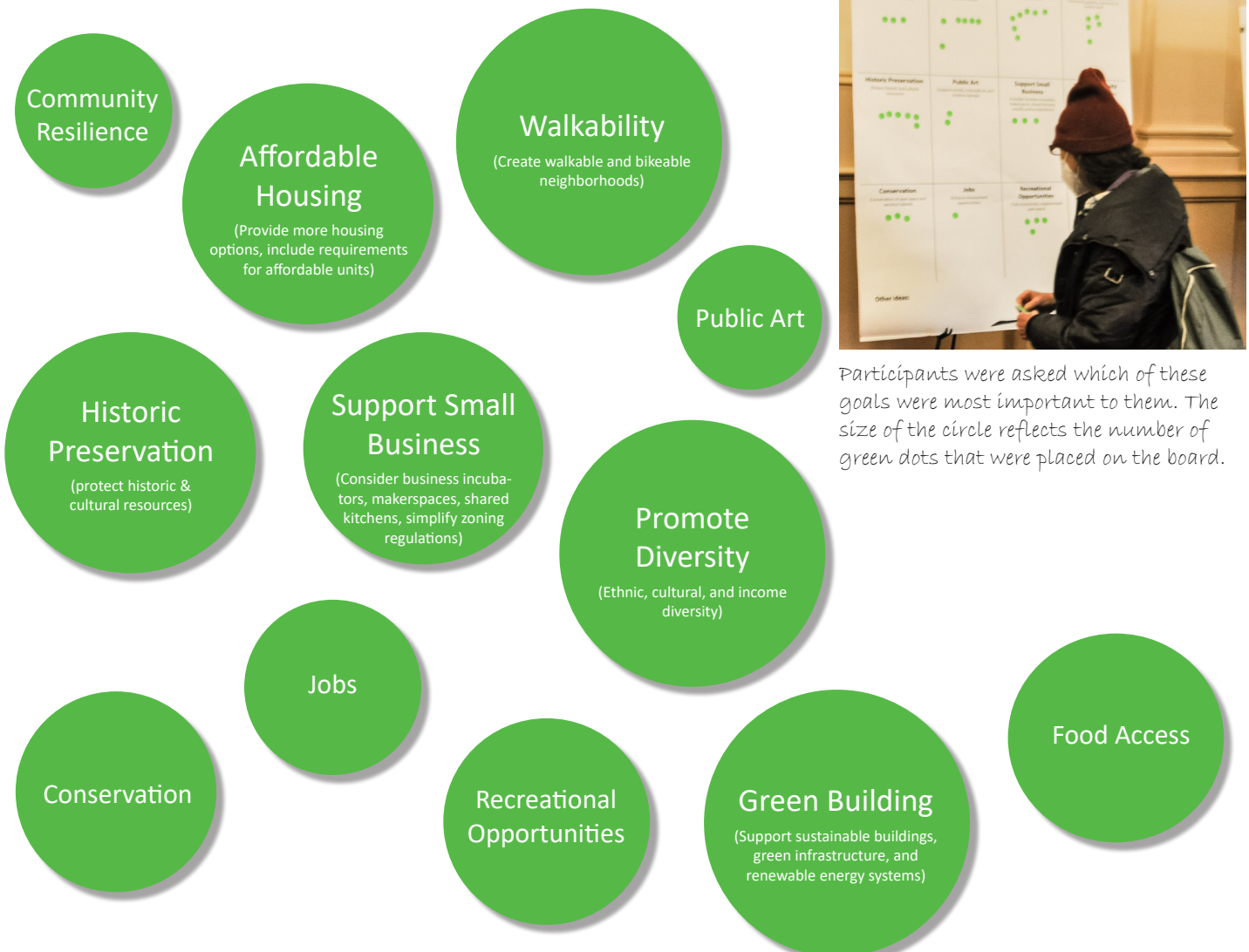
OPEN DESIGN STUDIO

During the charrette week, there were several “Open Design Studio” sessions, where community participants could drop in and get up to speed on the work being done. Open studio hours were held at City Hall (Saturday afternoon); Rondout Community Center (Sunday evening); Kingston Library in Midtown (Monday evening); and the Old Dutch Church in Uptown (Tuesday evening). Planning team members were available for one-on-one conversations, to discuss what they had been hearing as well as review initial sketches for sample sites that apply the ideas.

Displayed around the room were boards with prompts for people to write their ideas. For example one prompt asked “What character, form & appearance should new buildings in Kingston have?”. The boards also included dot exercises where participants placed green dots next to items they liked. As the charrette went on, the boards began to fill with information. The input received is summarized on the following pages, and will be used to inform the code.

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU:

IDENTIFY GOALS THAT COULD BE ADVANCED THROUGH UPDATES TO THE ZONING CODE



Participants were asked which of these goals were most important to them. The size of the circle reflects the number of green dots that were placed on the board.

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE PLACES IN KINGSTON?

"Waterfront trolley route"

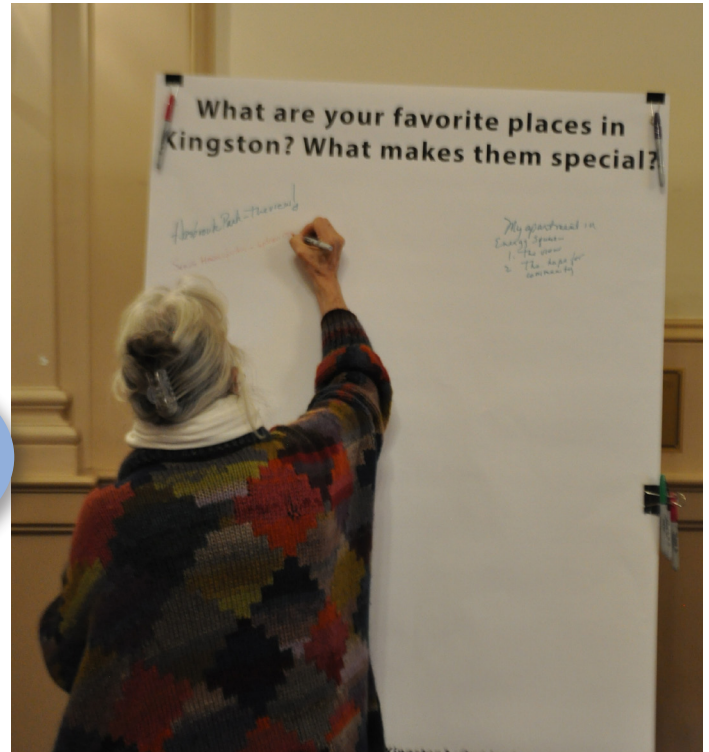
"Senate House Garden"

"YMCA farm"

"Four corners, especially Rough Draft"

"All the rail trail connections"

"Hasbrouk Park"



WHAT CHARACTER, FORM & APPEARANCE SHOULD NEW BUILDINGS IN KINGSTON HAVE?

"Appear historic but designed for future resilience."

"Bluestone"

"More homes of all kinds."

"Minimal space for cars - pedestrian friendly."

"Accessibility for all people."

"Public art."

"Good architecture."

"Mixed-use."

—Sample of responses from community participants during the charrette week



VISUAL PREFERENCE EXERCISE

Throughout the charrette public input was collected using dot exercises. Participants were asked to place a green dot next to buildings and places that they would like to see more of in Kingston. Images were divided into three categories: commercial & mixed-use buildings, residential buildings and public space. The photos were of buildings or places with varying architectural appearance, setbacks, and urban form. This exercise can inform the code drafting by identifying the examples of “good DNA” in the city that the code standards should permit and encourage more of.

Charrette participants were asked WHAT TYPES OF BUILDINGS AND PUBLIC SPACES DO YOU WISH THERE WERE MORE OF IN KINGSTON? SELECT 6 IMAGES THAT ARE IN YOUR VISION.

Photos seen here received the most green dots.

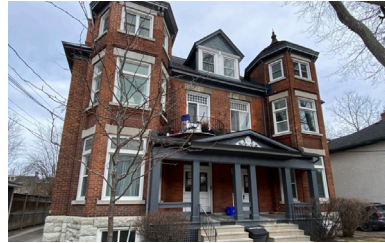
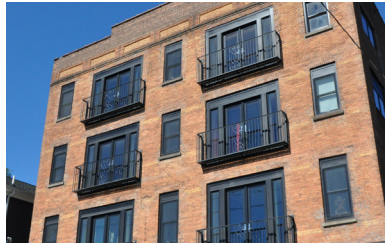
COMMERCIAL & MIXED-USE

MORE OF THIS



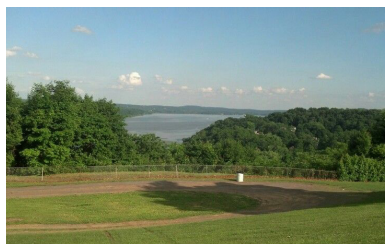
RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

MORE OF THIS



PUBLIC SPACES

MORE OF THIS





STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Stakeholder meetings were held at the City Hall planning studio on Monday, November 8th and Tuesday, November 9th. Meetings were organized into an assortment of topics: housing, transportation, environment, business & economic development, preservation, institutions & non-profits, community stakeholders, and arts & culture. Participants could join in-person or virtually via zoom. Community members with knowledge and interest in each topic were invited to attend, and each meeting was open for any interested community member to attend as well. Participants described their ideas or goals related to the discussion topic, and discussed how the form based code could help achieve their goals. After each meeting, attendees could also look at design drawings in-progress by members of the planning team, who were in the same room.

- » HOUSING
- » TRANSPORTATION
- » ENVIRONMENT
- » BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- » PRESERVATION
- » INSTITUTIONS & NON-PROFITS
- » COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS
- » ARTS & CULTURE



WORK-IN-PROGRESS

At the end of the charrette week there was a Work-in-Progress presentation where the team shared their work to date. The presentation was held in-person at City Hall Council Chambers, and was also recorded and posted online. The presentation reviewed the charrette week events and a synthesis of big ideas, as well as sample site studies that visually explored those ideas. Following the charrette, a three minute summary video was also posted at engagekingston.com, so that those who were not able to attend the charrette events could have a brief overview of the work and ideas so far.



OF THE MANY IDEAS YOU HAVE SEEN TONIGHT, WHICH ONES SEEM MOST EXCITING TO YOU:

“Design based on the **historic fabric** (pre WWII) ... Buildings **fronting on the street** ... Redevelopment of vacant Rondout space to bring it back to life ... **ADUs** ... Narrowing the through streets in Wilbur ... **Affordable** living homes ... **Parking** ... Adding streets and re-fronting streets for better **walkability** ... **Environment** ... Updating the zoning code to encourage the **optimal outcome addressing current needs** ... Addressing the issues with limited allowed uses ... **Streetscape** included in the code ... **Infill examples, shorter blocks** ... **Street walkability**, speed limits and design ... **Live/work space** ... The way the team has gathered and leveraged data ... Seeing all of the good stuff that’s non-conforming was super illuminous”

—Sample of survey responses from community participants at the work-in-progress presentation



SYNTHESIS MAP

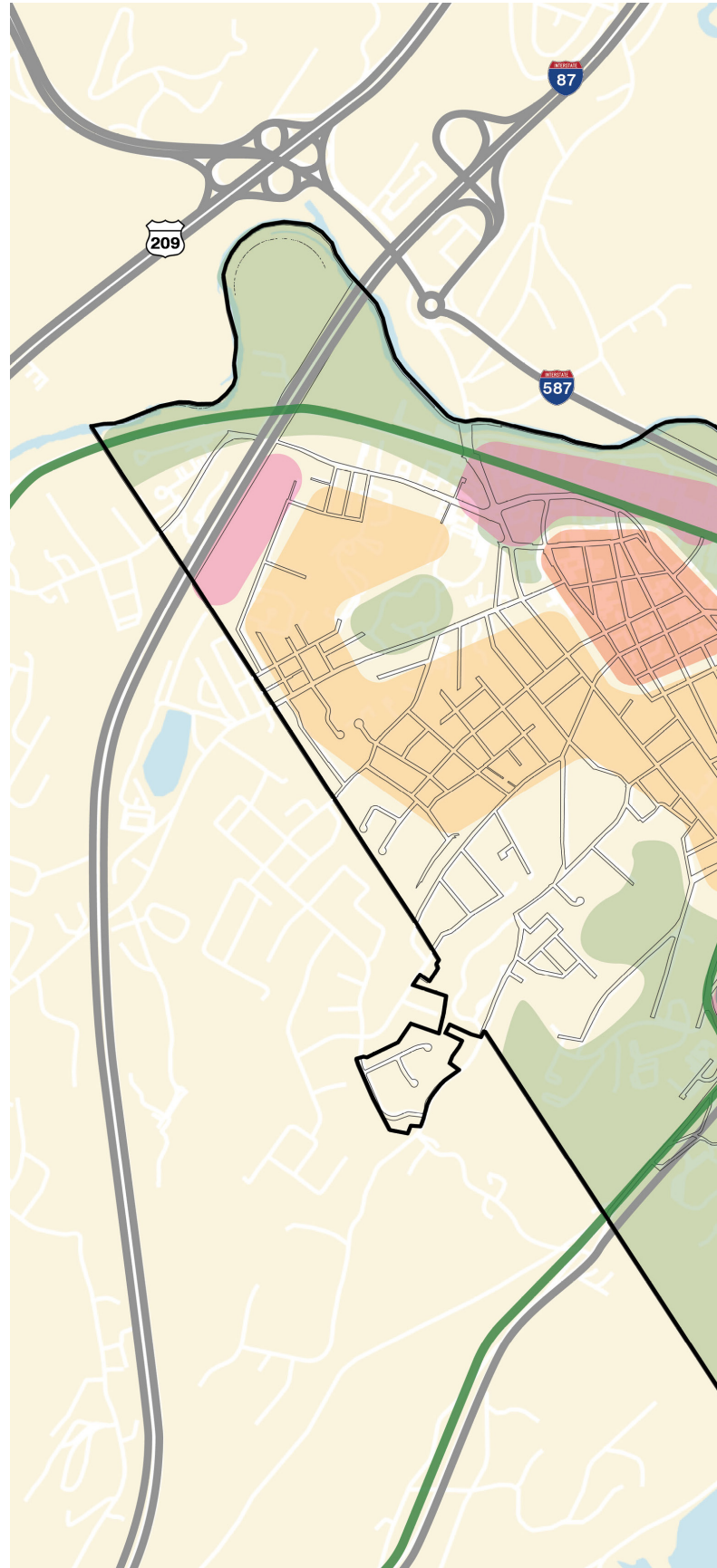
SUMMARIZING COMMUNITY INPUT

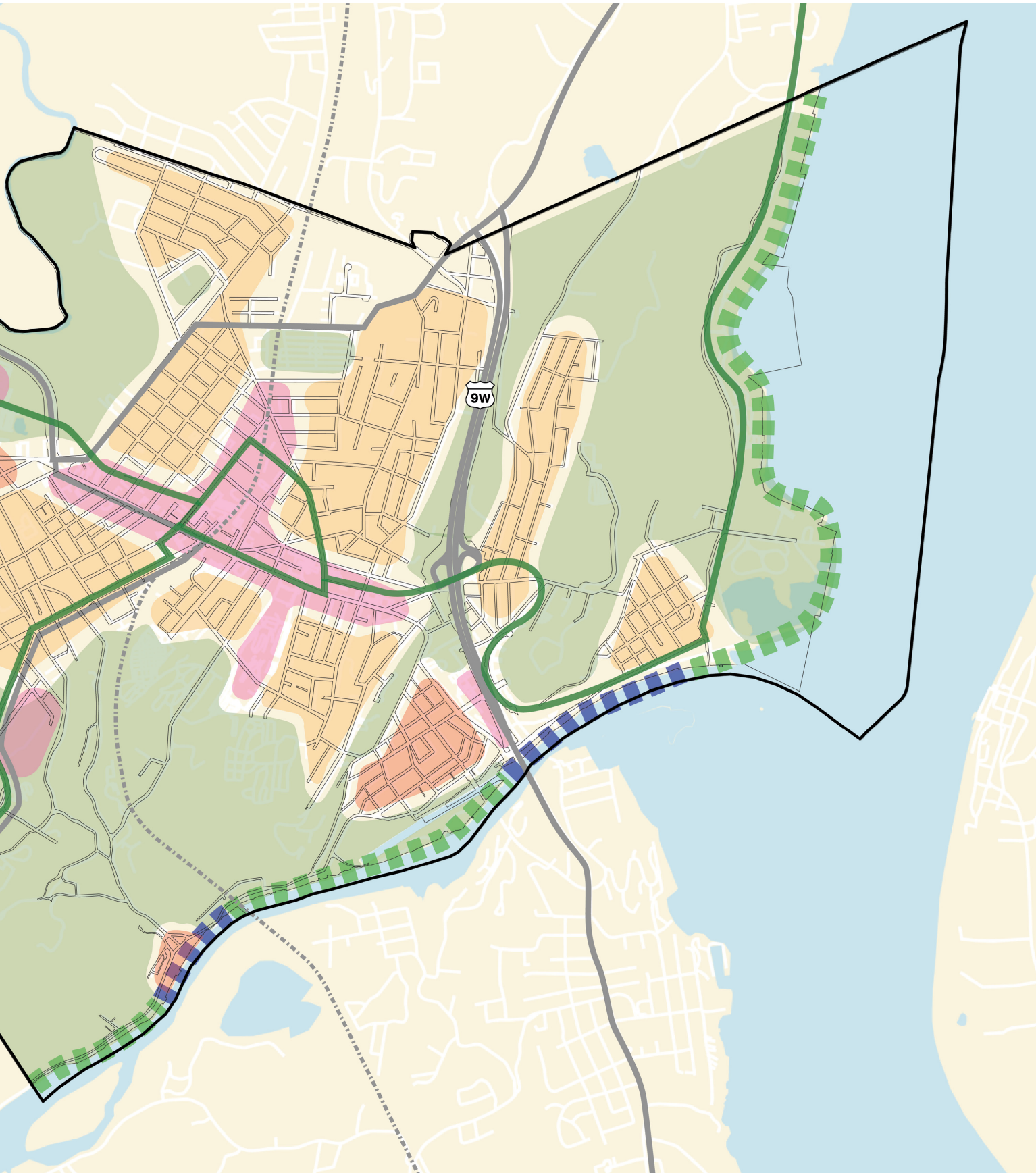
Following the charrette, the DK&P team created this map to graphically synthesize input from charrette participants, marking locations where “major themes”, or ideas and priorities heard the most often, apply. These common themes include:

- **Neighborhood Preservation & Affordability**, preserving existing housing stock while finding ways to include more affordable housing in most neighborhoods in the city. This idea includes supporting existing residents by expanding housing choice and availability.
- **Historic Preservation** was a major theme in the Uptown, Rondout and Wilbur neighborhoods.
- **Neighborhood Infill Areas**, locations identified as opportunities for growth and development at a scale compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
- **Conservation** of important natural resources in the area, such as along Esopus Creek and the Hudson Valley bluffs.

MAJOR THEMES

-  Neighborhood Preservation & Affordability
-  Historic Preservation & Affordability
-  Neighborhood Infill Areas
-  Conservation
-  Shoreline Protection
-  Waterfront Use Area
-  Greenline Trail







BIG IDEAS

ENVISIONING A BETTER CODE

Through community conversation and input at charrette events, several shared “big ideas” for improvements to the code are emerging.

BY-RIGHT BUILDINGS: SIMPLE, SMALL IS EASY & ENCOURAGED

It should be easy to do the right thing; that means if someone is wanting to undertake new development that is in keeping with the community vision and the traditional scale and form of surrounding development, it should be allowed *by-right* and easy to get approval. The rules should be easy to understand and enforce, and there could be a quicker path to approval if that development is a smaller scale and follows the loved, historic patterns within Kingston. A more time consuming, conventional path could be retained for proposals that are larger or more impactful, to ensure that such proposals receive an extra level of scrutiny.

BUILDING-TO-STREET RELATIONSHIP: CONTEXT MATTERS

A building-to-street relationship describes how buildings meet and define the street—how far buildings are located behind the sidewalk, how much of the front of a lot is occupied by building wall, how the building facade is designed, and what gift the building offers to the street. For example, streets may be lined by shopfront windows at the back of the sidewalk, or by residential facades behind a shallow setback with stoops or porches along the street. Building-to-street relationship defines the environment within a neighborhood; if a new building is not compatible with surrounding buildings, it can downgrade the pedestrian experience and weaken neighborhood character. Great cities are made up of a variety of urban contexts, from natural areas to neighborhoods to main street corridors. What is permitted on a given street should be required to fit the envisioned place / neighborhood context.

HOUSING: & AFFORDABILITY: PRODUCE A MIX OF TYPES IN HIGHER QUANTITY

During the charrette, most conversations included a discussion of housing. More housing, specifically housing affordable to a mix of incomes, is greatly needed to support the existing population, aging in place, to provide homes for the next generations of Kingstonians as well as to meet continued market demand for newcomers. Encouraging housing production by allowing it in more parts of the city and removing potential barriers (such as minimum parking requirements) was discussed. There were also conversations about allowing and encouraging more types and sizes of dwellings that could appeal to a variety of households. This includes “missing middle” housing types (duplex, multiplex, live-work, rowhouse, etc.), as well as accessory dwelling units (ADUs) that provide naturally occurring affordable housing. In addition to providing more housing options, ADUs can also increase affordability of existing homes by providing a second source of income to homeowners.

ENVIRONMENT: SUPPORTING A GREEN AND RESILIENT FUTURE

Supporting resiliency was a key theme throughout the charrette; conversations included big picture goals of lowering vehicle miles traveled by making more trips possible by walking, biking or transit, and detailed design solutions such as prioritizing green infrastructure and street trees within the public realm. Allowing neighborhood scale mixed use development is one of the community’s most effective strategies for reducing the city’s carbon footprint, as is encouraging the reuse of existing buildings to reduce the waste and energy associated with building demolition and materials for new development. There was also discussion of increasing access to fresh and healthy food by allowing more opportunities for urban agriculture, encouraging pollinator habitat and native plants in landscaping standards, and requiring future development to adapt to sea level rise and flooding.

STREET DESIGN: WALKABLE & BIABLE, TREES & BLUESTONE

Kingstonians treasure their walkable historic neighborhoods, and want to make the city more walkable and bikeable by specifying the details for future street design improvements. The desire to preserve existing street trees, and to require new trees as a part of future street improvements (and include the right planting details to ensure that sidewalks are not compromised by tree root growth) was a big topic of conversation. The preservation of bluestone sidewalks, and a strategy for maintenance of sidewalks was also often cited by community participants as critical to preserving the city's heritage.

RIGHT-SIZE PARKING

Several opinions emerged regarding parking for existing and future development. A few participants said they wanted a parking space waiting for them then they arrived at their destination. Many participants explained the existing minimum parking requirements were a burden to small businesses and to the reuse of existing buildings, and were holding back the production of additional housing units. Some expressed a desire to eliminate minimum parking requirements altogether or at least do so in certain locations or for certain scales or types of development, to encourage small scale infill, building reuse and more housing units.

FIXING TROUBLE SPOTS: NON-COMFORMING LOT SIZE; HISTORIC PRESERVATION RULES; CLARIFYING STANDARDS

There are some trouble spots in the existing zoning. Currently, there are no graphic standards, and users have to reference multiple sections of the municipal code to supplement the zoning section. For lot width and depth, only minimum dimensions are stated. Where existing lot dimensions do not meet the minimum requirements, a parcel becomes infeasible for investment and redevelopment without special approval. Without maximum dimensions, proposed buildings can exceed the envisioned height, bulk and massing of the neighborhood's loved patterns. There are also places where the rules need to be clarified so that developers, community members and city officials are clear on what is permitted. (This is particularly applicable to historic districts.) There is an over-arching desire for the new code to be clear and easy to use and enforce, to remove ambiguity and need for interpretation.

SAMPLE STUDIES & ANALYSIS

With these Big Ideas in mind, during the charrette the planning team looked at sample sites across the city in various neighborhoods, to test ideas being discussed. The following pages include these sample site studies; over the next few months, the planning team will use insights learned from these studies (and additional analysis) to draft code provisions that describe building massing, frontages, and street design details, as well as requirements for parking, affordability, and conservation of open spaces.





MIDTOWN

TESTING FUTURE INFILL FOR EQUITABLE & LIVABLE TRANSFORMATION

Within the Midtown area, north of Broadway and along Cornell Street there are currently an abundance of underutilized parking lots. These areas could be unlocked as opportunity sites by introducing new streets to divide these large sites into walkable blocks. Infill on these sites pulls value from Broadway up into the neighborhood.

The aerial perspective and plan sketches show what is possible by introducing housing, work/live and main street commercial spaces (cafes, restaurants, boutiques, social lounges etc.) to support the artist community. New public open spaces are surrounded by the front of buildings and could be used for urban agriculture. The testing evaluates how this area can transform by restitching the community fabric, introducing compatible infill, and transitioning from the main street to the existing neighborhood using different building types.

1

What we heard: Desire for walkability and enhancement of the pedestrian experience. Having a consistent “build-to” location for the front of new buildings facing streets and public open spaces offers predictability of the built environment and increases pedestrian comfort.

2

What we heard: Desire for a range of building types to support the community. A variety of lot sizes (width and depth) were tested based on the historic patterns in Kingston. A variety of lot sizes can lead to a variety of building types and uses. Sketches include live/work, shopfront, flex, multiplex, duplex, single-family, and carriage homes, enabling livable density.

3

What we heard: Desire for additional public open space. New public open space and the greenway trail is faced by the fronts of buildings and gifts-to-the street.; urban agriculture is incorporated in mid-block areas.



View of potential infill along Cornell Street adjacent to the Shirt Factory building



Potential future infill in Midtown

Existing conditions



PONCKHOCKIE

PRESERVE THE EXISTING COMMUNITY, ALLOW FOR COMPATIBLE INFILL

Ponckhockie is one of Kingston's historic neighborhoods, and many of the existing lot sizes, building types and heights don't match the requirements of the current zoning code. There is a strong desire to support the existing community's efforts to remain in place; affordability is a key concern. On vacant lots, having standards that match the existing built form would make it easier for landowners to take part in small-scale, incremental building over time, with new buildings matching the height, bulk and massing of existing buildings and unlocking opportunities for additional housing.

1

What we heard: Existing neighborhood patterns should be preserved and emulated. New incremental infill can match the same setbacks and massing as existing homes.

2

What we heard: A mix of affordable housing types and options is desired with new infill, to provide opportunities for existing residents to remain in the neighborhood.

3

What we heard: Desire to increase affordability. Allowing for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) offers a more affordable housing option. These small units could be attached or detached from existing residential buildings. They provide opportunity for an affordable rental unit, a living area for extended family members, and a potential additional source of income for homeowners.

4

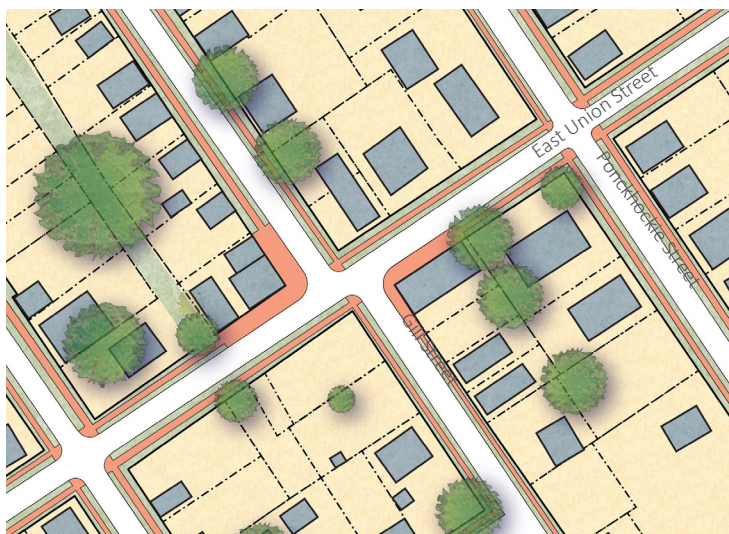
What we heard: Desire to increase opportunities for urban agriculture. Community gardens with programmable market stalls could occupy vacant lots and serve as neighborhood gathering places.



This property on East Union Street is subject to a 30' rear setback and 15' front setback, which is incompatible with surrounding buildings and essentially makes this lot unbuildable in the eyes of the existing zoning code. In this instance, the property is owned by the Kingston City Land Bank. In a scenario in which the Kingston City Land Bank was in a position to redevelop this lot with additional housing, the existing zoning regulations would hinder the development of new affordable housing. New regulations that match the existing form will remove this obstacle.



Neighborhood preservation and small-scale infill in Ponckhockie



Existing Conditions



RONDOUT

REBUILDING EAST OF BROADWAY

Rondout was greatly impacted by urban renewal in the 1960s; there is vacant land that remains east of Broadway. Zoning standards can prescribe the type of development that should take place here. The community expressed a desire to see active uses that complete both sides of Rondout's main street. This study sample looked at rebuilding with street-oriented mixed-use development that fits the setback and scale of the historic urban fabric.

1 What we heard: Active buildings should replace vacant parcels, creating a two-sided streetscape on Broadway. Mixed-use buildings of a usable depth and height front the street. Parking is located behind the buildings.

2 What we heard: Kingston needs more housing. Row houses, live work buildings and apartments can provide housing opportunities.

3 What we heard: Affordable housing is a priority. Varying building heights/scales were tested during the charrette. An affordable housing standard could allow for buildings to be taller than others nearby (such as this 6-story building) in return for additional affordable units.





Potential future development along Broadway in Rondout



WILBUR

CONSERVE & CONNECT

In Wilbur, residents identified a number of concerns centered around improvements to connectivity and natural resource protection. The historic village of Wilbur is bounded by the river and bluffs and has been constrained even more so in recent history by fast moving auto-oriented thoroughfares leaving limited space for improvements. Wilbur is in need of a land use regulatory framework that is informed by these issues and written specifically for the neighborhood.

- 1 What we heard: Designing streets for slower vehicle speeds, consistent with a historic village, will create a safer pedestrian environment. Pedestrian-oriented design at the intersection of Wilbur Avenue with Davis / Dunn Street is a first step. Missing sidewalks in the neighborhood could be added through street re-design.
- 2 What we heard: A safe pedestrian/bike connection to Rondout is desired.
- 3 What we heard: The bluffs above Wilbur are natural resources to be protected.



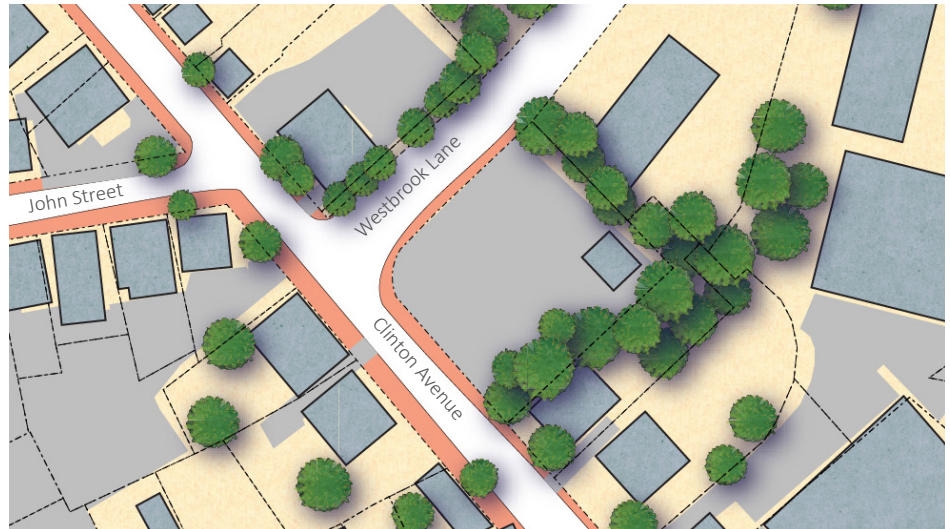
UPTOWN

COMPATIBLE INFILL ON AN UNDERUTILIZED PARCEL

This site on Clinton Avenue and Westbrook Lane in Uptown contains surface parking and a vacant building today. The plan and visual on the next page examines what could be built under a new form-based code.

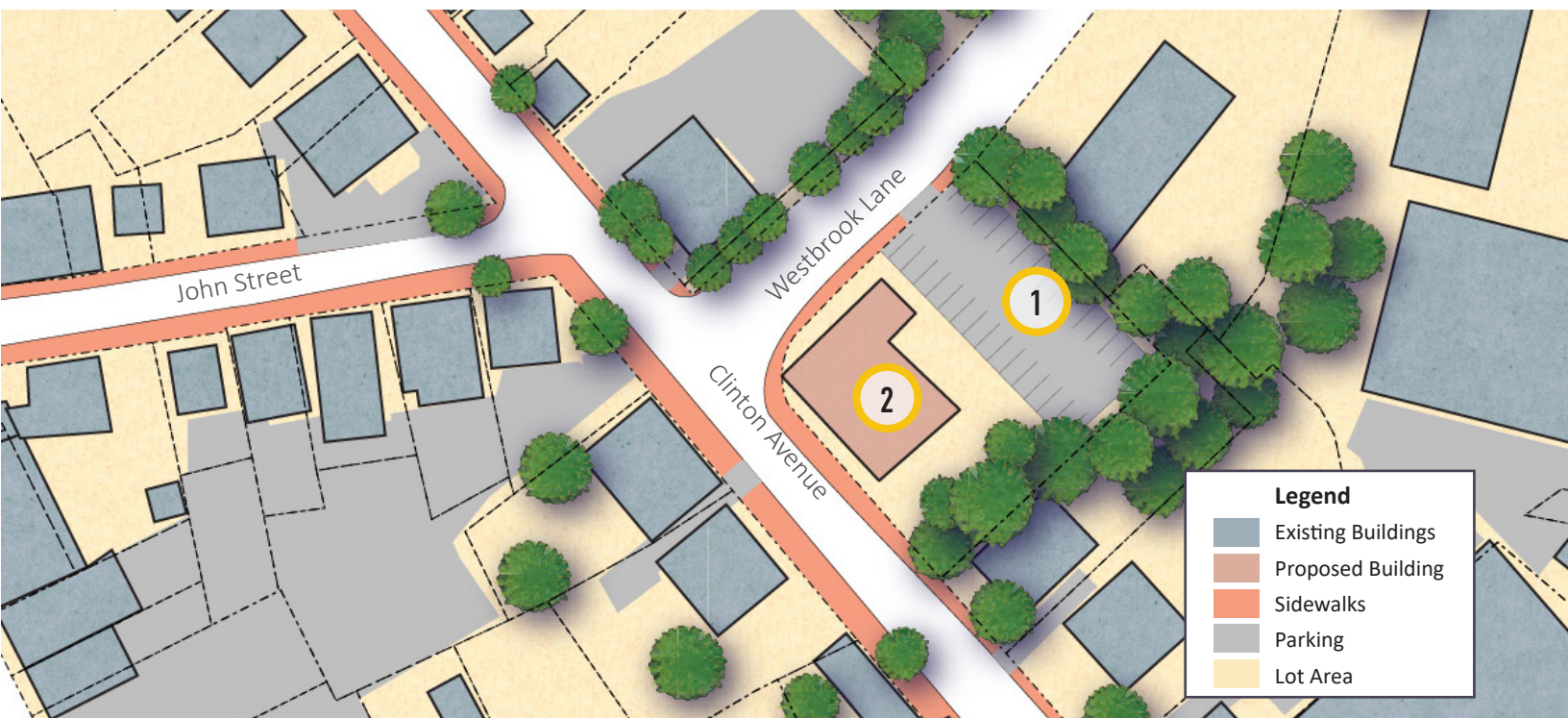
1 What we heard: Walkability is a priority. The new building is oriented to the street; parking (enough to accommodate a commercial building under the current standard) is in the rear of the lot.

2 What we heard: New development should be compatible with existing. The new building matches the scale and setbacks of surrounding buildings.



Existing conditions

Below: Potential infill building on an underutilized parcel on Clinton Avenue





UPTOWN

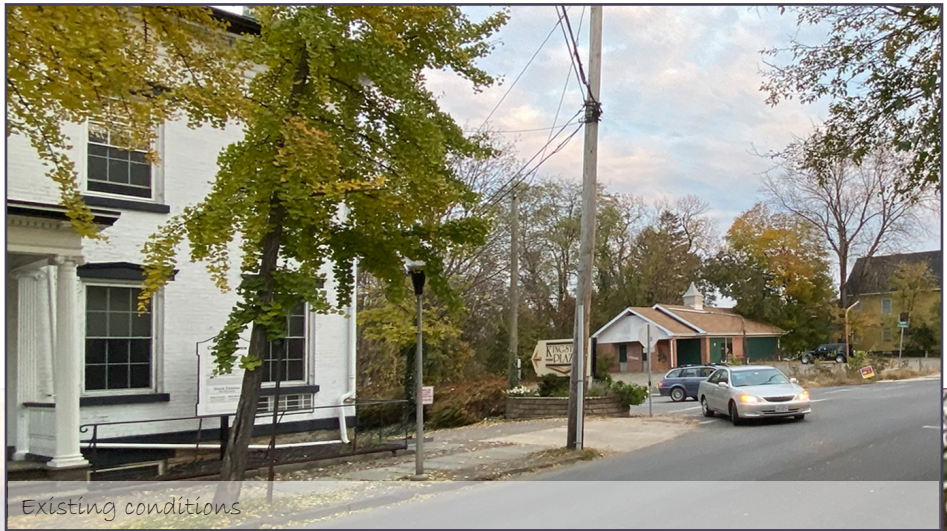
COMPATIBLE INFILL ON AN UNDERUTILIZED PARCEL

This visual imagines what a new building with a footprint as shown on the previous page, could look like. With a form-based code, building height and setbacks, the parking location, setbacks, and architectural details can be prescribed.

- 1 What we heard: New buildings should match the scale and character of existing buildings on the same street. In this image, the building facade is behind a small setback, similar to other buildings on Clinton Avenue. Parking is hidden in the back of the lot. The building height and architecture is compatible with surrounding buildings.



Potential new building that matches the scale and character of existing buildings



Existing conditions



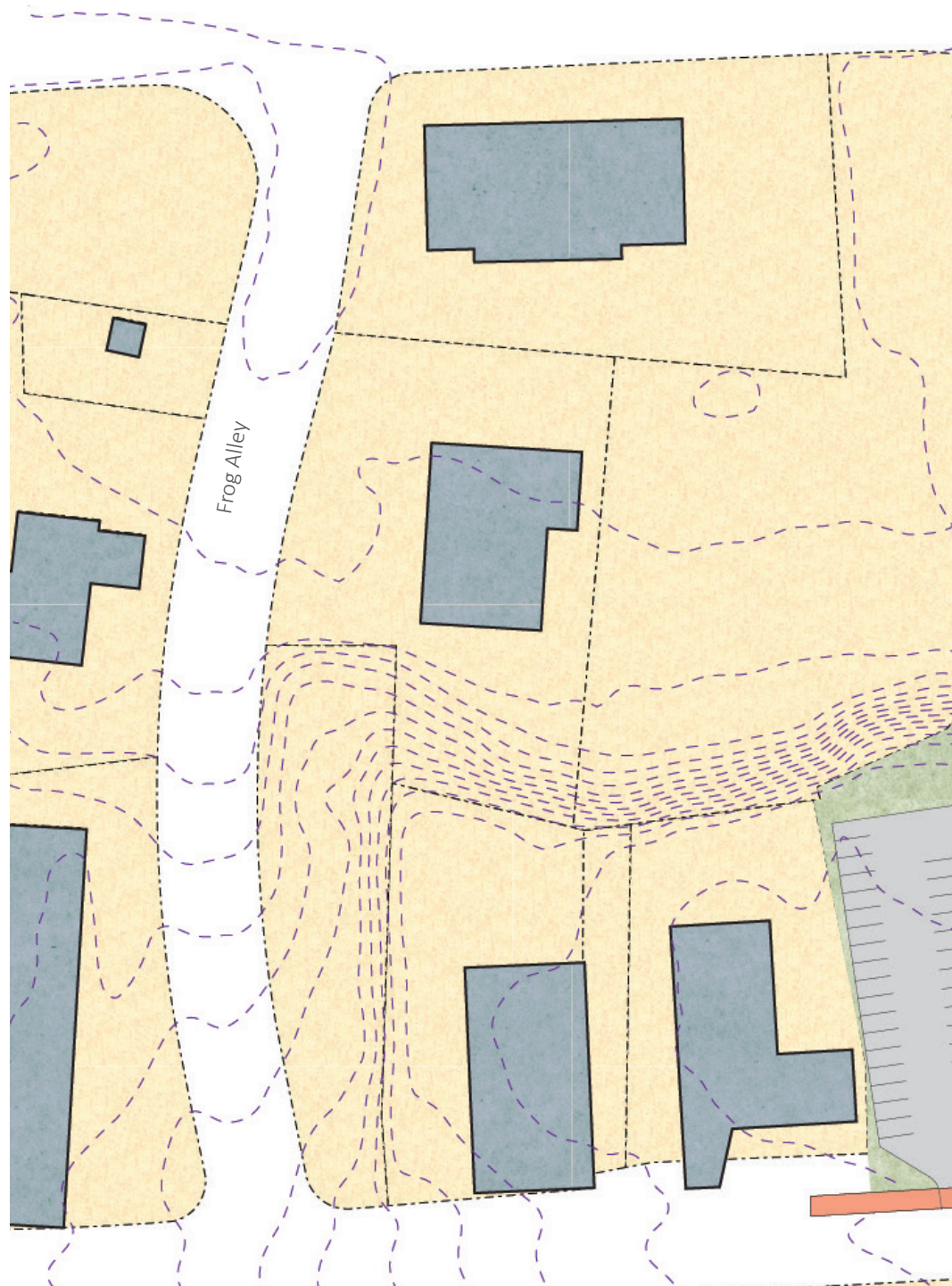


UPTOWN

ENVISIONING FBC STANDARDS

The development form currently on this site on Schwenk Drive includes buildings set behind parking lots. The idea for this diagram was to imagine what the building-to-street relationship could be if the same building footprints/program had been developed using a form-based code that prioritized walkability and connectivity.

- 1 What we heard: Development should support an improved pedestrian realm. Buildings are positioned towards the street to create a pleasant walking environment along the sidewalk. Large sites like this one could incorporate new internal street connections with sidewalks. Parking is located to the rear.
- 2 What we heard: Connectivity to the historic district is desired. Currently, this embankment is a forgotten space. A trail or step-street could connect pedestrians between Front Street and Schwenk Drive.



Hypothetical re-arrangement of existing buildings and parking following the standards of a potential form-based code





STREET DESIGN

During the charrette, the planning team's mobility experts took a deep dive into how transportation policy, especially street design, can be calibrated to better match what the community wants in land use and urban form. Land use planning and transportation planning need to be done in coordination, so that streets can move people to their destinations but also function as vibrant places of commerce and community. For this reason, form-based codes incorporate street design standards into the zoning ordinance, so that the sidewalks and streetspaces in front of a building complement the building types, urban design and mix of land uses permitted there.

Many charrette participants talked about walkability. They want to maintain existing walkable areas and see more walkability throughout the city. Walkable design includes having streets that feel safe and comfortable for pedestrians, but also safe and comfortable for cyclists and transit users. Walking, biking and transit users need to be supported; all three modes are vulnerable to high vehicle speeds as well as to the elements (sun, snow, etc). Increasing walkability has several benefits: it is good for businesses and can be an economic development tool; it supports community health by increasing exercise and reducing air pollution and the city's carbon footprint; and it is more efficient as less land needs to be allocated to parking.

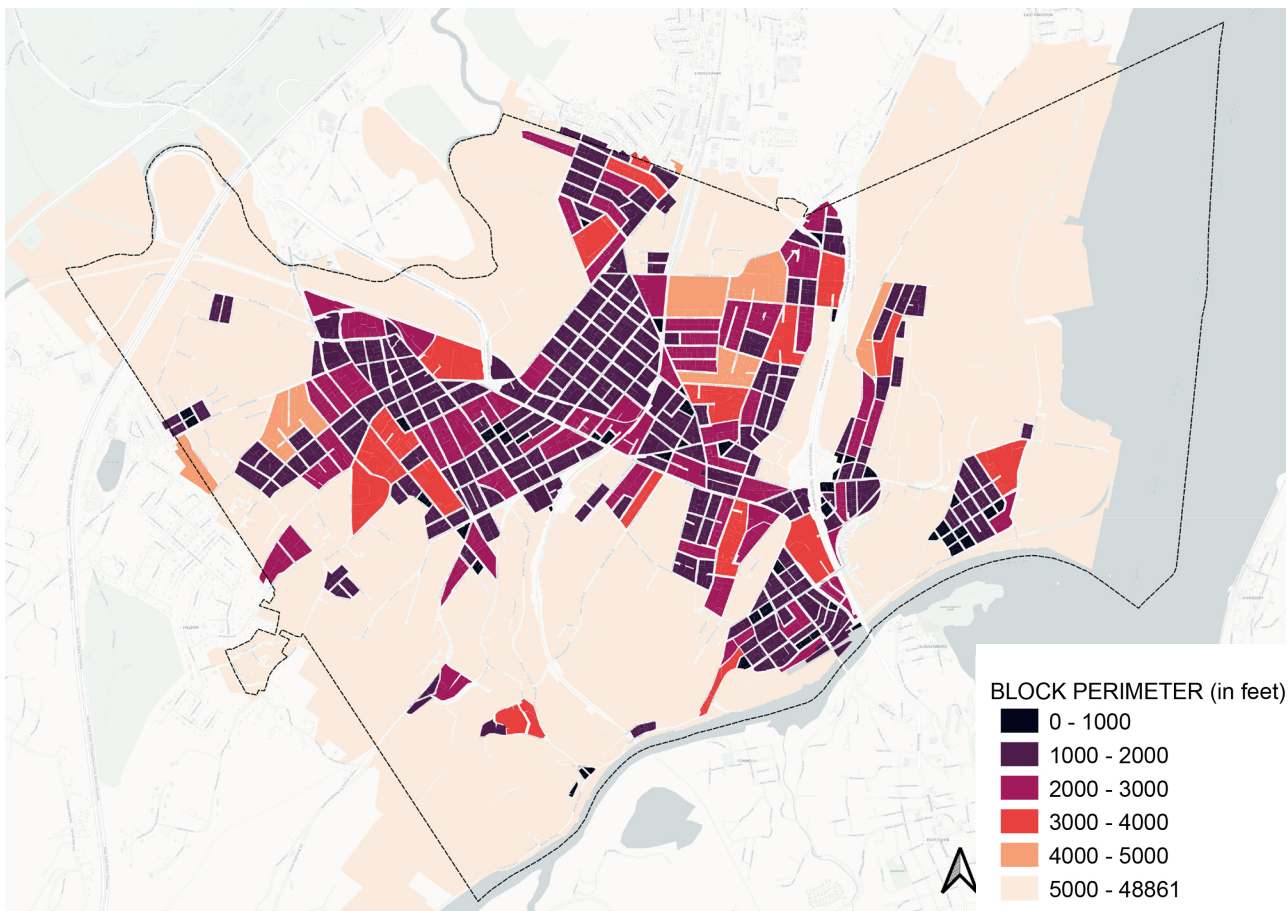
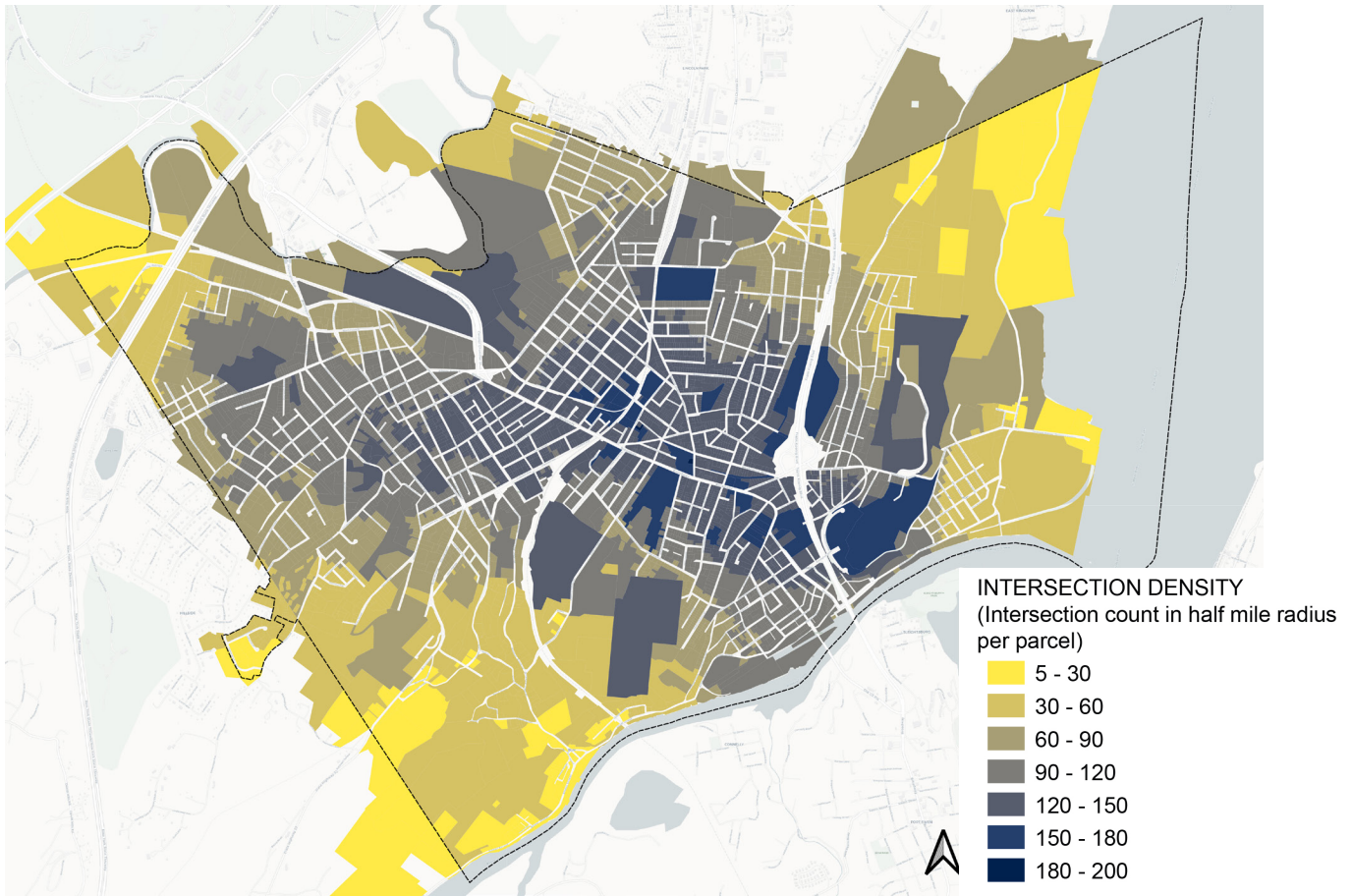
The walkability of a place is impacted by a number of factors. Vehicle speed is a top concern, particularly for safety but also for comfort in sharing the streetspace. Other factors include the presence of street trees, sidewalks and on-street parking; the mix of land uses (if there are destinations in walking distance); and buildings that are close to the street creating a sense of enclosure and protection from the elements. Small block sizes also add to walkability. Where there are small block sizes frequent intersections cause vehicles to slow, a greater percentage of the block frontage is usually occupied by building facades, and there are more paths for pedestrians to move directly to their destinations. Most historic settlements established before the prevalence of the automobile have small block size as a defining ingredient. This is one key reason why Kingston's historic districts have such a comfortable pedestrian realm.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM CHARRETTE STREET DESIGN DISCUSSIONS

- Kingstonians want to prioritize walkability in street design standards.
- Context matters—one set of rules can't fit all. National engineering standards have been recently revised to include context-based design. Kingston can match its street improvement projects to its land use and urban form vision, instead of the other way around.

"Context" describes the physical form and characteristics of a place. Context is one of the fundamental bridges between planning and engineering. When places are well understood, treasured context can be preserved. Also, undesirable places can be programmed to change according to an urban design vision for the desired future context. National transportation design standards, including AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) policy, have started using context to establish varied design standards that are informed by land use and urban form. The context assigned to a street determines key design criteria, including lane width, street tree placement, onstreet parking, and many other elements necessary for good street design. This ensures that the walkability of historic areas is not harmed by incompatible street design changes, and newly developed or retrofitted areas can place a priority on walkable design.

The form-based code will identify the desired urban form for all of Kingston's streets and neighborhoods, and provide street standards that are appropriate for each context. The analysis maps at right (completed during the charrette) are part of the first steps in identifying the city's existing urban form and context. The maps visualize intersection density (the number of intersections within a half mile radius of each parcel) and block perimeter. The darker shades are parcels with a greater number of intersections and smaller blocks – generally, the more walkable, urban neighborhoods of the city. The lighter shades are where blocks are larger with less intersections, generally where more suburban or natural areas of the city exist today. This type of analysis, together with visioning for the desired future form of development, will inform the code's district boundaries and standards.





NEXT STEPS

It is anticipated that the final result of this planning process will be a Form-Based Code to guide future development in the City of Kingston according to the vision described by the community. The code will prescribe physical details of future development, including the relationships of buildings to streets, the height and massing of buildings, architecture and street design details.

The DK&P team will put together a first draft of the code over the next few months. This process involves creating a Regulating Plan and specific requirements for each zone identified on the plan. The team will also test additional sample sites, to evaluate how the new standards will shape infill development. There are anticipated to be additional outreach meetings in early 2022, and a first draft of the code will be complete in the spring. Additional workshops will be held to review the draft once it is ready.

While the code is being drafted, planning team member the Laberge Group will be working on a draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) that evaluates potential impacts of the code. A scoping session will be held in early 2022, and the draft document is anticipated to be complete in May.

Interested community members can review the work to date, leave questions and comments, and learn about upcoming meetings at [**engagekingston.com/kingston-forward**](https://engagekingston.com/kingston-forward).