



**Town and City of Oneonta**

**Joint Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP)**



*Photo Credit: Oneonta Susquehanna Greenway*

**DRAFT Community Participation Plan**

**January 2023**

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## I. Introduction

### The Oneonta LWRP

The City and Town of Oneonta will develop a Joint Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) to establish community goals and strategies for future development along Wilber Lake, Oneonta Creek, and the Susquehanna River. The LWRP will focus on developing waterfront resources in a sustainable manner, creating recreational opportunities, preserving historic architecture and redevelopment of underutilized lands in downtown Oneonta.

This project involves the preparation of a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) pursuant to the provisions of New York State Executive Law, Article 42, for the City and Town of Oneonta. Completion of this project may integrate preparation of a Harbor Management Plan (HMP) as set forth in 19 NYCRR Part 603.3 and further described in guidelines prepared by the Office of Planning and Development. This is in Inland Waterway LWRP. Inland communities should attempt to address all aspect of the HMP that are applicable.

The primary waterfront issues to be addressed in the LWRP have been preliminarily identified as:

- Public access to waterbodies including trails
- Improved recreation amenities associated with waterfront including new parks
- Supporting and growing water-related tourism
- Catalyze downtown revitalization
- Water quality protection
- Improved visual access to the waterfront
- Natural resource protection

### Project Team and Roles

A Waterfront Advisory Committee (WAC) comprised of local stakeholders and government officials will oversee all aspects of the Oneonta LWRP. A consultant team led by Elan Planning & Design LLC (Elan) was selected to support the Committee with their work to complete the LWRP. The Committee will also be supported by the City of Oneonta Planning & Development office and will receive guidance from NYSDOS.

### Community Participation Plan (CPP)

The Oneonta LWRP involves a significant public involvement component to gather input from residents, property owners, business owners and various other stakeholders. This CPP details the approach that the Project Team will use to fully involve the community in the study process.

The goals of the Community Participation Plan are to:

1. Foster dialogue and interaction between the public, the City and Town of Oneonta, applicable regulatory agencies, and the project team during the course of the study process;
2. Gather information from the community to inform decisions; and
3. Build ownership and support for the process and outcomes.

The CPP outlines an approach to achieve the goals by:

1. Sharing information with the public regarding the LWRP study process;
2. Providing opportunities for the public to voice issues, concerns, and opportunities related to the project; and
3. Providing an opportunity for the public to contribute their vision and ideas for the development of the Oneonta waterfront including the Waterfront Revitalization Area (WRA).

The success of the LWRP project will depend on broad community input and support. The sections below summarize the outreach and engagement measures that will be employed throughout the project. These measures will follow public health and safety protocols related to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the process unfolds, it may be appropriate to modify the CPP to best capture public input or to respond to changing public health guidelines.

## **II. Previous Public Involvement**

Past planning efforts in the City and Town of Oneonta have engaged the public to better understand the community's vision and priorities for the waterfront area. The LWRP will consider and build on public input from recent planning efforts related to the study area. These may include the City of Oneonta Comprehensive Plan Update (2019), Oneonta Downtown Revitalization Initiative Strategic Investment Plan (2017), and Town of Oneonta Comprehensive Plan (2014).

## **III. Steering Committee**

A Waterfront Advisory Committee (WAC) will guide development of the LWRP. The WAC is comprised of a range of interests (see table 1), including private or business interests, property owners, regional planning entities or other regional groups, environmental groups, and members engaged with community groups. The committee also includes representatives of federal, state, county, and local municipal agencies, including agencies with jurisdiction over project activities or the project area.

The responsibilities of the Steering Committee include:

- Provide input and advice on the study process, documentation, waterfront issues, existing conditions, technical studies, conceptual designs, and potential opportunities;
- Collect ideas and input from the public as well as key stakeholders and experts; and
- Keep the public informed and engaged throughout the study process.

The Waterfront Advisory Committee will hold regular meetings and public engagement opportunities throughout the planning process beginning with a **kick-off meeting November 30, 2022**. The kick-off will review the LWRP's intent and scope. It will solicit initial input on the study process including public participation and development of project goals, opportunities, and constraints.

Committee meetings will be held approximately once a month with time for members to break into sub-committee groups. Elan will prepare agendas and meeting materials and will work with the City to distribute these to the full Steering Committee in advance via email. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, meetings will be conducted virtually for the foreseeable future.

Table 1: Waterfront Advisory Committee

Name	Organization
Al Cleinman	Future for Oneonta Foundation (FOF)
Jordan Clements	Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation
Mark Davies	Common Council Member, City of Oneonta
Mark Drnak	Mayor, City of Oneonta
Trevor Fuller	Otsego County Planning
Cassandra Harrington	Destination Marketing Corporation
Jim Hurtubise	Highway Superintendent, Town of Oneonta
Pat Jacob	Former Town Board Member, Town of Oneonta
Ed Lorenz	Resident, Bike enthusiast
Meaghan Marino	City of Oneonta Planning Commission, OtsegoNow
Greg Mattice	City of Oneonta
Judy Pangman	Community Dev Director, City of Oneonta
Donna Vogler	SUNY Oneonta & Susquehanna Greenway Commission
Robert Wood	Former Supervisor, Town of Oneonta

Chris Yacobucci	Public Works Director, City of Oneonta
Stephen Yerly	Code Enforcement Officer, City of Oneonta

## IV. Public Participation

A variety of public engagement techniques will be used throughout the study process. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most public events will be held remotely using virtual tools and platforms. Where necessary and if possible, small in-person activities may be held in accordance with health and safety guidelines. Engagement techniques may include:

- Walking tours
- Public open houses and meetings (virtual and in-person if possible)
- Interviews, focus groups, and/or community meetings
- Interactive online and messaging tools
- Project website

A focused effort will be made to engage people who typically do not participate in planning programs such as youth, immigrants/new Americans, residents of public housing, persons with limited English proficiency, and persons with disabilities. These efforts may include taking the study process to these groups by collaborating with local community organizations on events and outreach. Care will also be taken to make events and outreach strategies accessible. Considerations will include choosing ADA-compliant venues, providing audio and visual materials, using electronic materials compatible with screen readers, and providing guidance on how to request accommodation for non-English speakers and people with disabilities or special needs to enable them to participate in each event.

### Walking Tours

The Project Team will organize a socially distanced walking tour of the Susquehanna Greenway. The tour may include brief on-site interviews with residents, property owners, and other stakeholders. Steering Committee members will be invited to participate.

Further virtual or in-person site visits with stakeholders or members of the public may be held during the study process to examine specific elements such as walkability, transportation needs, green and gray infrastructure opportunities, effects of potential sea level rise, redevelopment opportunities, access, etc.

## Public Open Houses and Meetings

Several public open houses and meetings will be held to share information about the project and invite feedback from the community. They will include interactive elements which may be available over a period of one or several days such as live streamed presentations; public surveys; polls; mapping tools; and/or comments submitted by text, email, website, or mail.

### Virtual Public Open House #1

A virtual public open house will be organized in March 2023 to introduce the LWRP project including the intent, scope, and process for updates to the program. The event will solicit initial feedback on various project elements including:

- Purpose of the LWRP
- WRA vision
- WRA boundary description
- WRA Inventory and Analysis of existing conditions, issues, and opportunities

### Virtual Public Open House #2

A second Public Open House will be organized in Summer 2023 to introduce potential projects and redevelopment opportunities for the WRA and BOA study areas. Community feedback will be solicited on the ideas and project or redevelopment designs. The following elements will be presented:

For the LWRP:

- Identified issues and opportunities for the WRA
- Proposed land and water uses for the WRA
- Proposed projects for the WRA

### Public Presentation and Informational Meeting(s)

A final public meeting will be hosted in the Spring 2024 to present the draft outcomes of the LWRP. The meeting will describe and invite feedback on the contents of the draft document including the vision, existing conditions, study area analysis, key findings, and proposed actions. It may also be possible to target specific groups within the study areas to solicit feedback.

## Interviews, Focus Groups, and Community Meetings

Elan will work with the Waterfront Advisory Committee, the city, and town to identify and engage key stakeholders through interviews, focus groups, and/or community meetings. These may include government officials, technical experts, community and not-for-profit organizations, private sector

interests, and environmental groups, among others. Stakeholders will be invited to share their unique perspectives and expertise on key issues such as complete streets, inclusivity, public infrastructure and utilities, natural resources, business and real estate development.

### **Stakeholder Interviews**

The Project Team will identify key individuals in the community that have been or will likely be involved with the redevelopment of waterfront. One-on-one interviews will be held to understand issues, concerns, and ideas for redevelopment. This format is preferred for stakeholder meetings as people are more comfortable expressing their ideas and desires.

### **Focus Groups**

The Project Team may organize Focus Groups to gather information on a particular issue or topic area. Elan and City staff will work to organize focus group with relevant experts and community members/organizations using a roundtable or workshop format.

### **Community Meetings**

The Project Team will meet with local groups and community organizations throughout the project to discuss the goals and progress of the LWRP and to gather feedback. These discussions may be organized as part of a regularly scheduled meeting or as a special standalone event. Community meetings may be useful for reaching groups that are often underrepresented in public planning processes.

### **Interactive Online and Messaging Tools**

The above activities may be supplemented by additional engagement opportunities (online or in-person) such as design charettes, pop-up presentations, mapping stations, and text or social media campaigns.

## **V. Outreach Methods**

Project updates and engagement opportunities will be publicized through a variety of channels to ensure broad public participation. The coordination of outreach materials and meeting/event logistics will be led by Elan with support from city staff.

**Contact database** – A community contact list will be updated by Elan and used on a regular basis to keep key stakeholders up to date on the Oneonta LWRP.

**Coordination with local media** - All public meetings will be publicized in the community through press releases to local media outlets. Local media will also be invited to attend public events. Media releases will be developed in partnership with the city.



**Project website** – Elan will maintain a website with information about the project and how to get involved. Announcements, events, documentation, and engagement opportunities will be posted to the website, with links to and from the City and Town of Oneonta websites. Links will also be provided to established NYSDOS websites for further information on the LWRP.

**Outreach materials and social media** - Elan will develop outreach materials such as flyers, road signs, business cards, mailers, and/or tweet cards to display and distribute in the community, at public events, and on the city and town social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter).

## **VI. Local, State, and Federal Contacts**

The following information provides contact information for local, regional, and state agencies participating in the LWRP.

### **City of Oneonta:**

Judy Pangman, Community Development Director  
City of Oneonta  
258 Main Street  
Oneonta, NY 13820  
[jpangman@oneonta.ny.us](mailto:jpangman@oneonta.ny.us)

Stephen Yerly, Code Enforcement Officer  
City of Oneonta  
258 Main Street  
Oneonta, NY 13820  
[syerly@oneonta.ny.us](mailto:syerly@oneonta.ny.us)

### **New York State Department of State (DOS)**

The DOS is the primary sponsor of the Oneonta Joint LWRP and has provided funding for the study. In addition, the DOS will provide oversight, direction, and technical assistance throughout the duration of the project. Contact information for the DOS representative for this project is provided below:

#### LWRP

Jaime Reppert  
Office of Planning and Development  
New York Department of State  
Suite 1010  
One Commerce Place, 99 Washington Avenue

Albany, New York 12231-0001

[jreppert@dos.ny.gov](mailto:jreppert@dos.ny.gov)

### **Elan Planning and Design LLC**

To provide a broad range of services necessary to complete the LWRP, the Project Team includes a multi-disciplinary team of practitioners led by Elan Planning and Design LLC (Elan) of Saratoga Springs, New York. The Project Team will provide technical expertise for the duration of the project. The consultant on the Oneonta LWRP, will be Elan Planning and Design LLC (Elan) of Saratoga Springs, New York. Elan is the lead firm for this project and will be the primary point of contact. In order to provide a broad range of services necessary to complete the LWRP, the project team includes a multi-disciplinary team of practitioners comprised of:

The primary contacts for the Project Team are listed with contact information below:

Lisa Nagle, Principal

Elan

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## VII. Project Schedule

Task Title		2022		2023												2024			
		NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
Preparation of the LWRP																			
1	Project Scoping Meeting	Summer 2022																	
2	Preparation of Public Participation Plan & Website																		
3	Section I: WRA Boundary		★	NOTE: WRA Boundary outlined and mapped in August 2022, revised January 2023															
4	Section II: Inventory and Analysis			★															
5	First Public Information Meeting					▲	⊕												
6	Section III: LWRP Policies				★														
7	Section IV: Proposed Land & Water Uses & Proposed Projects					★		★		★									
8	Second Public Information Meeting									▲									
9	Section V: Local Implementation Techniques										★								
10	Section VI: State Actions																		
11	Section VII: Local Commitment and Consultation																		
12	SEQR																		
13	Draft LWRP												★						
14	NYS DOS Review																		
15	Address Comments																		
16	NYS DOS 60-Day Review																		
17	Final LWRP																		▲
Project Reporting																			
1.1	Project Reporting																		

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Municipal Team Meeting

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Public Open House

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Interviews and Focus Groups

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WAC Meeting