

Delaware Avenue NY Forward

**Public Meeting
Town Hall Auditorium
September 14, 2023**



Meeting Goals

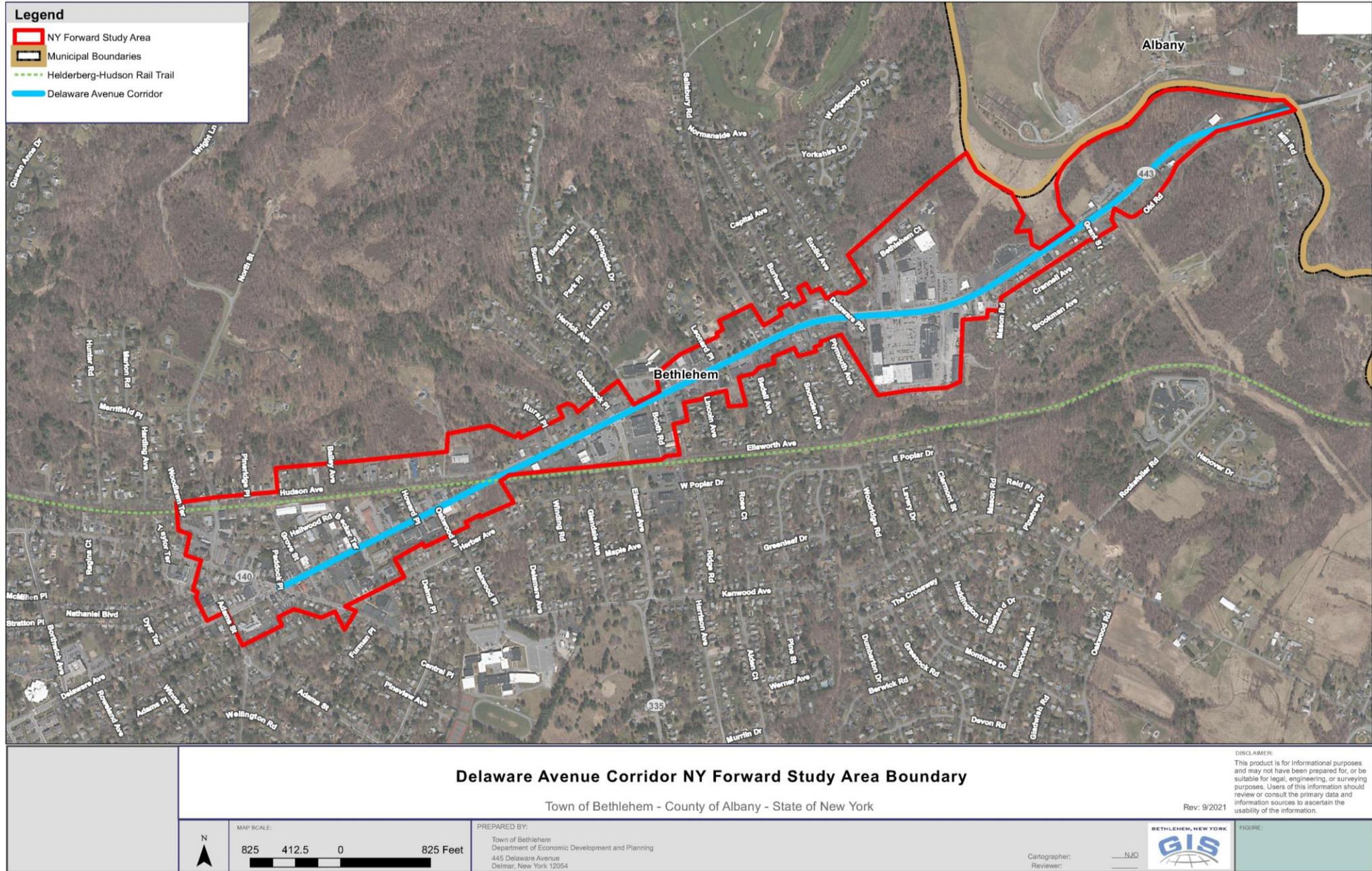
1. Share information about program and application:
 - a) Background
 - b) Vision statement
 - c) Potential projects

2. Gather public feedback on:
 - a) Updates to vision statement
 - b) Feedback on community/public space projects
 - c) New project ideas

> BACKGROUND

What is NY Forward?

- NYS competitive grant program to “invigorate and enliven downtowns in smaller & rural communities”
- Identify vision for downtown, corresponding projects
- Supports public improvements & private redevelopment
- Focused on Delaware Avenue



Building on 2022 Effort

- Second attempt (not awarded grant in 2022), positive feedback on application
- 2022 application included 13 projects, plan to include most of these in 2023
- Complements ongoing Delaware Avenue Complete Streets project

Application & Awards

- Application due 9/29
- Award announcements likely early in 2024
- If awarded, 6+ month planning process with State—call for projects, public engagement, project selection/funding
- Projects likely funded & able to begin by early 2025

> VISION STATEMENT

Strengths

Examples from 2022 public engagement

- Small, locally-owned businesses
- Lots of businesses with a variety of goods and services
- Convenience of businesses close to home for many residents
- Sense of community, feel of “old-fashioned Main Street”
- Proximity to Albany County Rail Trail

Weaknesses

Examples from 2022 public engagement

- Business facades could be improved
- More landscaping needed, too much concrete
- Accessibility issues to/from businesses
- Opportunity to draw more visitors from region
- Lacking coordination, cohesiveness

Vision Characteristics

Examples from 2022 public engagement

- Safe, accessible for all
- All needs can be met
- Easy access to businesses
- Inviting and unique
- Functional and well-appointed
- Clean, attractive
- Coordinated, cohesive
- Family-friendly
- A welcoming entrance to Town

As Bethlehem's historic main street, Delaware Avenue builds on its greatest asset—a community of locally owned small businesses offering diverse goods and services—along a cohesive corridor that is walkable, sustainable, attractive, and accessible by all users. It is a regionally serving destination that leverages the strength of its small businesses and the popularity of the Albany County Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail.

> PROJECTS



> PRIVATE REDEVELOPMENT

333 Delaware Avenue

- Restoration of first-floor commercial space to accommodate gastro/pub inspired restaurant
- Convert second floor space above into a craft cocktail and dessert bar
- 2-story concrete and steel deck off the east side for outdoor seating
- Exterior enhancements to façade, landscaping, energy efficient windows, energy efficient HVAC systems
- Adjacent to Albany County Rail Trail



316-318 Delaware Avenue (Main Square)

- Convert underutilized second floor commercial office space to one and two bedroom apartments, up to 10 units
- Would create new housing in one of the most walkable parts of the corridor, highly visible location
- The entire first floor and some second-floor units would remain commercial



1-3 Howard Place

- New mixed use building with first-floor office space and 3 housing units
- Gabler Realty would occupy the new commercial space, and lease its current office space to new commercial tenants
- Facade would mimic the feel of a residential building, aligned with the Town's hamlet design guidelines
- Adjacent to Albany County Rail Trail



278 Delaware Avenue

- Addition and conversion of second-floor office spaces into residential
- Building façade and signage improvements to enhance aesthetic appeal, along with new landscaping
- Adjacent to Albany County Rail Trail
- Key location for the NY Forward project, directly east of the Rail Trail bridge—draw pedestrians further up Delaware Ave. from the Four Corners



156-160 Delaware Avenue

- New commercial building on site of former drycleaner
- Addition of 10 to 12 residential units above the existing building
- Important anchor in the Elsmere section of Delaware Avenue, providing new commercial space and housing



> CORRIDOR-WIDE/PUBLIC SPACE

Commercial & Multifamily Property Improvement Grant Fund

- Property owners may have improvement projects in mind that aren't a full redevelopment, but are still cost-prohibitive
- Grant fund would be open to any commercial or multifamily property owner in the project focus area
- 5 core categories of funding: a) signage b) façade improvements c) landscaping d) lighting and e) energy efficiency
- Modeled on Town's Microenterprise Grant Program
- Potential to provide up to 30% of project cost

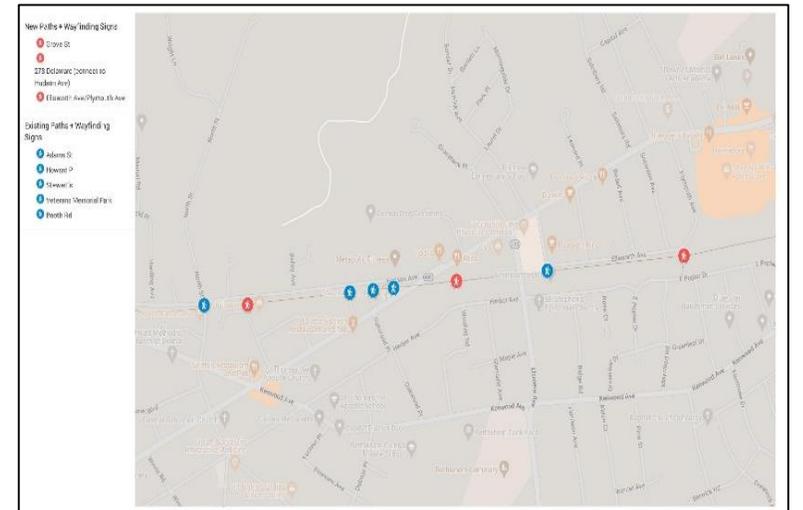
Delaware Avenue Gateway, Lighting & Banners

- Streetscape improvements to better brand the Delaware Avenue corridor, make it more cohesive
- Gateway treatments at the east end of Delaware Avenue, welcoming entrance to the district
- Decorative streetlamps extended through corridor
- Wayfinding signs along Delaware Avenue
- Decorative banners throughout corridor



Albany County Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail – Access & Wayfinding

- Rail Trail used by est. 250,000 people annually—make them aware of business district and improve access
- Create additional trailheads to more easily and safely allow Rail Trail users to connect to the Delaware Avenue corridor
- Install wayfinding signs at each trailhead



386 Delaware Avenue (Delmar Reformed Church)

- New passive public space in the Four Corners area of Delaware Avenue
- Approximately 7,500 sf
- Would include benches, tables, and other minor hardscape improvements, integrated into the existing tree-lined, well-maintained landscape



197 Delaware Avenue (Community Bank)

- New passive public space in the Elsmere section of Delaware Avenue
- Approximately 5,000 to 7,000 sf,
- Similarly to include benches, tables, and other minor hardscape improvements
- Additional landscaping and conversion of some of the existing asphalt parking lot into green space



151 Delaware Avenue (CDTA Park & Ride/Albany Water Board)

- New passive public space in the Elsmere section of Delaware Avenue
- Approximately 8,000 sf
- Similar improvements as other public spaces



> STATION BOARDS

Contact

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