

City of Watervliet, NY

Comprehensive Plan



Adopted March 17, 2011

Acknowledgements

This Comprehensive Plan document is the end product of the effort of many individuals who worked cooperatively for the success of the City of Watervliet. The following people contributed many hours of concerted effort to the production of the plan. Their commitment, energy and enthusiasm made this plan possible.

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Introduction

Setting the Scene

The City of Watervliet (2000 population 10,207) is located approximately 5 miles north of the City of Albany, the capital of New York State. The City of Watervliet has many of the amenities of a larger city while maintaining a small town atmosphere. As the City prepares its first Comprehensive Plan, it faces a complex mix of opportunities and challenges. Many of those opportunities stem from the City's rich historic and architectural legacy and vibrant and diverse neighborhoods, all situated in a uniquely designed urban environment. The community is at a defined point of transformation and change in its social and economic history, especially with the development opportunities that have never existed before because of the privatization of 60 acres at the Watervliet Arsenal. At the same time, much of Watervliet's legacy has been challenged by disinvestment and loss of population.

City leaders wondered how the citizens of Watervliet can collectively build a future that takes full advantage of its historical legacy and current opportunities, a future that not only responds to immediate needs but also addresses the increasingly critical long-term issues of environmental, housing, economic and social sustainability. The ultimate goal is for the City of Watervliet to become a sustainable city in the long term – a city that offers economic opportunities along with an excellent and equitable quality of life for its citizens, who in turn can share the community with each other and live in harmony with the natural environment. The development of this comprehensive plan will be key to creating this vision and realizing that future.

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Under New York State law, municipalities are granted the authority and responsibility to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans. As defined in the state legislation, a comprehensive plan is a document that presents goals, objectives, guidelines and policies for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and community development. Also known as a master plan or land use plan, a comprehensive plan provides guidance to municipal leaders and helps to ensure that the needs of the community will be met. Other units of government are mandated to honor the City's comprehensive plan in taking actions that may affect the City.

The action items described in the plan are not requirements. Rather, they are recommendations designed to provide focus and direction as Watervliet moves ahead to reach its preferred future. It will be up to the local community to decide on an ongoing basis which initiatives should be implemented in which order and how they wish to proceed to implement those initiatives. City government will support, facilitate and remove barriers during the implementation process. Continued active citizen participation will be key to the ultimate success of this plan. Although any future land use regulation must be in accordance with the principles of the Comprehensive Plan, there is no legally binding requirement that the City implement each of the action items proposed in the plan. The City Council should carefully examine proposed land use strategies to minimize the implementation cost to residents and protect private property rights.

Planning Process

The City of Watervliet has been developing the City's first Comprehensive Plan over the past year with the assistance of River Street Planning & Development, LLC, who were engaged by the City to facilitate the planning process. The focus of the comprehensive planning effort is asset based, building on community strengths and existing programs and efforts to:

- Encourage growth and development while protecting important historic, environmental and community assets
- Stabilize the city's neighborhoods and commercial districts
- Provide a broad set of policies and projects that will establish a framework and vision for growth of the city over the next 10 - 15 years
- Establish a defined Downtown area for shoppers with increased retail stores and services
- Recognize that tax base is critical so the City needs an economic development strategy that keeps existing businesses and attracts new businesses to Watervliet
- Ensure neighborhood protection and enhancement to promote the fact that Watervliet is a great place to live and raise a family

The work of River Street and City staff has been guided by a project Advisory Committee. The role of the Advisory Committee has been to guide and lead the planning process; collect and share relevant information; review documents; supervise the consultant team; educate residents about the process and the plan roles, responsibilities, charge and scope; and perform community outreach and publicity.

In addition to its work with the Advisory Committee, the City held focus groups with housing providers, City Department Heads, residents and other important stakeholders to gain insights on important issues facing the City. Advisory Committee and focus group input was supplemented by community meetings, including a visioning workshop and an action planning session. Additionally, the consultants contacted key stakeholders for additional information on economic development, housing, real estate tax base, natural resources, historic resources, recreation, transportation and infrastructure, and community service issues.

Community Profile

The City of Watervliet Comprehensive Plan is made up of two main sections: the Community Profile, which is a summary of existing conditions, and the Action Plan, which identifies specific short- and long-range projects and planning efforts to improve the City going forward. Based on research and interviews conducted by the project consultant and the public input process described above, the Community Profile describes the City, its residents and its resources; identifies needs; and discusses key issues, opportunities, and challenges impacting the future in Watervliet. It provides a profile of the City of Watervliet's population, land uses, historic and natural resources, economic development, housing, community services, real estate tax base, transportation and infrastructure, and recreation. The Community Profile serves as a basis for developing community goals, objectives, strategies and policies. The following briefly summarizes findings from the Community Profile:

- **Demographic Characteristics:** According to the 2000 Census, the City had a population of 10,207. Watervliet's population decreased 7.7% between 1990 and 2000. The City of

Watervliet accounts for 3.5% of Albany County's overall population. In keeping with population decreases, there was a 4.5% decrease in households from 1990 to 2000. Between 1990 and 2000, all age groups with the exception of adults between the ages of 45 to 64 also experienced a decrease in population. While the City's overall population is decreasing, the City is becoming more diverse, with minorities now comprising 9.9% of the population. Additionally, educational attainment levels in Watervliet reveal that in 2000, 81.3% of residents over the age of 25 have a high school diploma, which is 7.7% more of the resident population than in 1990.

- **Housing Characteristics:** 41.3% of the occupied housing in the City is Owner-occupied; renters occupy 58.7%. The housing stock in the City is old, with 60.9% of all housing units built prior to 1940. The City of Watervliet rental vacancy rate was 8.4% and the owner vacancy rate was 2.0% in 2000. This high rate is again attributed to the decrease in overall population. Approximately 12.6% of housing units in Watervliet are subsidized and the Watervliet Housing Authority reports lengthy waiting lists, particularly for their public housing units. Nearly one-third all renter households are cost burdened (paying in excess of 30% of income for housing costs). Housing concerns identified by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, City Department Heads and Housing Providers include absentee landlords, deteriorated housing stock and code enforcement issues, property maintenance challenges, and the need to improve rental housing and find quality tenants.
- **The Local Economy:** Known as the "Arsenal City", Watervliet's economy has strong ties to the manufacturing and "defense" industry and the Watervliet Arsenal still serves as a major employer of the City. The Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) Program at the Watervliet Arsenal will allow private companies to redevelop approximately 63 acres of underutilized land at the Army site. The program will not only create jobs but will put tax-exempt properties on the municipal tax roll that have never been taxable in 200 years.
- **Land Use Real Estate and Tax Base Analysis:** The City of Watervliet has a total taxable assessment base of \$248.2 million. 51.6% of the City's land area is dedicated to residential uses including single and multi family homes. Public services make up an additional 18.0% of the City's land uses, while Community Services occupy 10% of the land area in Watervliet. Only 3.3% of the City's land is vacant (19.5 acres). All other categories combined make up the balance of 16.6% with no other category occupying more than 7.5% of the City's land. An imbalance exists between the percentage of land in residential use (51.6%) and the taxable value that this land contributes (82%) in Watervliet. Residents use only 51.6% of the land, but contribute 82 cents of every dollar raised through property taxes. Approximately 55% of the City's property value is tax exempt.
- **Land Use and Land Management:** The City of Watervliet is a small urban city that is completely built out. Approximately one-half of the Watervliet's land is residential in use scattered throughout the City, while commercial uses are primarily concentrated along 19th Street, Broadway, and Route 32 (Second Avenue/Third Avenue). The Watervliet Arsenal located in the middle of the City is located on a 143 acre site and includes 72 buildings with 2.1 million square feet of manufacturing space. The City of Watervliet Zoning Ordinance provides eleven districts including four residential districts, three business districts, three waterfront districts and a manufacturing district.

- **Transportation and Infrastructure:** The City is served by municipal water and sewer systems which are both aged and in need of periodic upkeep and repairs. The City of Watervliet has been awarded \$50,000 to study the feasibility of creating a joint water district with the Town of Guilderland, where the City's reservoir is located. The City of Watervliet has 46.5 miles of roadway including 2.6 miles owned by the New York State Department of Transportation and 6.7 other miles (presumably owned by the Federal Government at the Arsenal). Parking is a major concern among residents and businesses.
- **Natural Environment:** Surface water resources within Watervliet include the Hudson River, two streams and about 6 acres of freshwater wetlands. The Hudson River forms the eastern boundary of the City, although residents have limited direct access to it because of I-787. With its location on the river, there are many areas of the City that lie within the 100-year flood plain including most of Broadway, First Street, and portions of 13th, 14th, 15th Streets and First, Second and Third Avenue north of the Watervliet Arsenal. The City has been actively addressing water quality issues on two important fronts by participating on an Albany County Water Quality Sub Committee that deals solely with stormwater issues and by working to eliminate combined sewer overflows in the City. According to the NYSDEC's Environmental Remediation Database, there were two sites within the City that were addressed under the Division of Environmental Remediation's (DER) remedial programs. Both sites remediation programs have been completed and the cases are closed.
- **Historic Resources:** The City of Watervliet is home to four historic buildings or sites that are listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. The recently completed Local Waterfront Revitalization Program identified additional potential historic sites. Cultural Resources including the Arsenal Museum and National Historic Landmark (gun powder magazine/"Iron Building") on the Watervliet Arsenal grounds.
- **Local Government, Public Safety and Community Services:** The City of Watervliet is governed by an elected Mayor and City Council. The City is comprised of seventeen departments and three boards/councils. Residents of the City are served by the Watervliet City School District which is comprised of an elementary school and a junior/senior high school. Watervliet is home to several parks and playground, a pool, bike trails and other recreational facilities.

Community Profile

Historical Background

Located on the western banks of the Hudson River, the City of Watervliet was first settled in 1630, when Patroon Killian Van Rensselaer purchased the area from Native Americans. The area's flat, rich lands and proximity to Albany's Fort Orange attracted early settlers. Derived from the Dutch word for plain- vlakke- Watervliet means the "overflowed plains", referring to the annual spring flood.



The City of Watervliet is a small remnant of what was once an enormous town that at one time encompassed an area comprising most of Albany County. Watervliet was the first township established in Albany County after the Revolutionary War. The City of Watervliet was incorporated in 1896, and occupies only a small part of the land it had occupied in 1788 as a town. Navigable waterways influenced the establishment, development, and growth of Watervliet. The Erie Canal completed a navigable water route from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes; as a result the Erie Canal connected the City of Watervliet to the eastern seaboard (New York City) and the western interior (Great Lakes) of the United States. As Watervliet grew, so did the towns and cities across the river serviced by the many ferry companies based in Watervliet. Watervliet became a hub of activity, trade, transportation, and commerce.

The presence of navigable waterways greatly influenced the City's development. Largely farmlands until the late 18th and early 19th centuries, businessmen came to realize the advantages of Watervliet's location adjacent to the Hudson River. As the northernmost settlement on the western shore before the impassible Green Island Rapids, Watervliet became a hub for nineteenth century commerce. The opening of the Troy and Schenectady Turnpike circa 1906 further enhanced the area's importance as a commerce and trade center.

The Township of Watervliet was incorporated in 1788. By the early 1800's, three villages were laid out within Watervliet. The Village of Washington was the first, and the southernmost of the villages. Later it was enlarged and renamed Port Schuyler. Gibbonsville, the second village, was located adjacent to the Village of Washington, and extended north to what was then known as Buffalo Street (15th Street today). The Village of West Troy was formed soon after, just north of Buffalo Street. In 1836, the three villages were incorporated as a single village, West Troy.

Fearing a British invasion during the War of 1812, the federal government purchased 12 acres of land from James Gibbons, to build an arsenal in Watervliet. The Gibbonsville Arsenal began as a distribution center for military goods. By 1817, the name would change to include Watervliet. Eleven years later, the complex would expand by 30 acres with yet another purchase by the U.S. Government, and become known as the Watervliet Arsenal.

Broadway was the City's first post-road and functioned as its waterfront thoroughfare. First called the Whitehall Turnpike, or Northern Turnpike, it was the primary north-south transportation route

for the region and likely originated as a Native American footpath. Passing through Watervliet, it ran along the shoreline of the Hudson and Stone Hook.

Stone Hook was an easily recognized reference point for navigators and land surveyors alike as it was an elevated topographic portion of natural blackish rock jutting out from the western banks of the Hudson River. Stone Hook was a common mooring place for ships as early as 1675.

For many years riverfront activity focused on transporting people and goods from one side of the Hudson River to the other. Ferries were used for traveling across the Hudson as early as 1777, when it is said that American troops crossed on the VanderHeyden ferry on their way to the Battle of Saratoga. The ferries operated from a number of points along the riverfront throughout the 19th century. The earliest ferry boats were flat-bottomed and driven with long poles. By 1800 ferries were attached to ropes across the river and were moved by the current. By 1820, horses on board the boats were moving the paddles. These horse-ferries were in operation until the late 19th century when steam powered ferries became more common.



In 1824, the Erie Canal opened, linking the Hudson River with the Great Lakes. The canal began north of Albany and paralleled the Hudson River up through Watervliet. The Canal passed through Port Schuyler (along what is now Route 32), into Gibbonsville through the United States Arsenal, along Albany Street, and up Erie Street in West Troy (now Second Avenue). A side cut to the south of the Arsenal was known as the lower side cut and one at Union Street (now 23rd Street) was known as the upper side cut. The side cuts provided, through a series of locks, access between the Erie Canal and the Hudson River. Providing passenger transport between Albany and Buffalo and Rochester, travel by boat on the canal was cheaper than travel by stagecoach so many families and foreign immigrants started their trips westward on the Erie Canal. An 1837 enlargement of the canal allowed larger boats that could transport more freight. The first weighlock for weighing the boats and cargo was built in 1825. In 1853, a new weighlock was built at the northern boundary of the village of West Troy.

With both the river trade and transport on the Erie Canal, Watervliet quickly became a strong commercial center. The area was ripe for manufacturing, settlement, production, shipping, and trade. The first Post Office opened in 1814; by 1823 there were hat factories, soda factories, flour mills, iron foundries, a cooperage factory, a brewery, hotels and a carriage manufacturer well established in this commercial center. These industries kept the river and canal active. Around 1850, there were said to have been more than forty ships owned and captained by citizens of the village. The lumber industry played a major role in the river activity, with one report claiming that over 130 ships were engaged in the business at one time.

West Troy was at its prime in the decades from 1840 to around 1870. The village attracted many businesses, including notably the Meneely Bell Foundry (a bell manufacturer); J.M. Jones Car Shop (established in 1839, a manufacturer of carriages, wagons, and later, street cars); and James Roy

Mills (established in 1843, makers of woolen and worsted goods). By 1850, there were numerous lumbering businesses, foundries, stove and other factories, as well as many home industries.

Around 1851, the Albany Northern Railroad was built. Its proposed location was parallel to the river, east of Broadway. However, local citizens realized the value of the riverfront and opposed the proposed location. This public outcry delayed construction of the railroad, and forced it to be relocated to the west at the base of the hill. The railroad further contributed to the advantageous location of West Troy, and growth continued. The Civil War brought somewhat of a boom to the local economy, with the population jumping from 8,952 in 1860 to 10,639 by 1870. About 1,500 people were employed at the Arsenal at that time in the production of munitions for the U.S.

The first Watervliet bridge was completed in 1874, spanning the river between Congress Street in Troy and Genesee Street (now 19th Street) in West Troy. In 1896, the Village of West Troy was dissolved to make way for the incorporation of the City of Watervliet. By 1925, rail and auto transportation had become a faster and more efficient way to carry people and goods. Increasingly, the City's industrial products (cannons, steel, and abrasives) were being transported by rail and highway. With the opening of the Barge Canal in 1917, which joined the Mohawk Valley directly to the Hudson River at Waterford, the Erie Canal along this section was abandoned and eventually filled.



Construction began in the early 1960s on the first segment of I-787 from Interstate 87 to Bassett Street. It was completed and opened to traffic in the mid-1960s. By 1968, construction had begun on the remainder of I-787 south of Watervliet. The portion of the highway between I-90 and NY 378 was completed by 1971; the rest of I-787 south of 23rd Street in Watervliet was built and open to traffic by 1973.

Since the 1970s construction of I-787 along the western shore of the Hudson River, the City of Watervliet has been effectively cut off from its waterfront. At one time housing a myriad of waterfront commercial and shipping industry uses, today all that remains accessible of the City's shoreline is a 9-acre shoreline park, Hudson Shores Park, and a much smaller, NYS Department of Transportation-owned trailhead. As infill was placed to support I-787 and the highway was intentionally constructed to flank the shoreline, a good portion of the land along the shoreline south of Hudson Shores Park is steep, graded terrain. This land is unbuildable, unusable, and inaccessible.

Demographic Characteristics

The Demographic Characteristics section of the Community Profile analyzes 2000 Census data and estimated 2009 Claritas Data (where available) for the City of Watervliet.

Key Observations

- The City of Watervliet is a small urban area and densely populated.
- The City has been losing population and households since 1990 and is projected to continue losing population.
- Watervliet's population is growing more diverse. Minorities now comprise 14.1% of the City's population in 2009.
- Watervliet's residents are slightly younger than Albany County or New York State and some comparable cities.
- The City is becoming more educated but still trails County and State averages in terms of educational attainment.
- Watervliet compares closely to other Capital Region cities in terms of population and household trends, educational attainment, and median age.

Regional Context

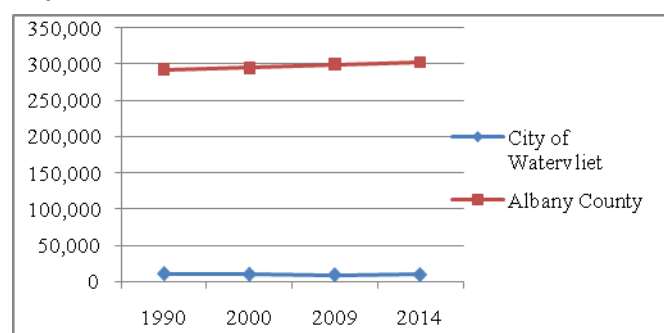
The City of Watervliet is situated on the Hudson River in Albany County. The City is part of the "Capital Region" and is located 5 miles north of Albany, New York's State capital. The City is comprised of 916 acres, or 1.3 square miles, but is densely populated with 7,851 people per square mile. Watervliet is located approximately 150 miles north of New York City, 200 miles west of Boston, and 200 miles south of Montreal. Watervliet is bordered by the Town of Colonie on three sides; the Hudson River is the City's eastern border. The Village of Menands is near neighbor to Watervliet to the south, though there is a small portion of the Town of Colonie between the City and the Village; the Town of Colonie borders the City to the north, with the City of Cohoes immediately to the north of the small portion of the Town of Colonie. The Village/Town of Green Island borders the City of Watervliet to the northeast. The City of Troy in Rensselaer County lies directly across the Hudson River to the east.



Population

Like many other small cities and villages across New York State, Watervliet has experienced a population decline in recent years. In 2000, the City of Watervliet had a population of 10,207 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. This represented a loss of 854 residents, or a 7.7% decline in population since 1990. Albany County as a whole had a marginal increase in population

Population Trends



Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000) and Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC)

of less than 1.0% between 1990 and 2000; New York State experienced a 5.5% increase in population from 1990 to 2000. But when comparing Watervliet to other Capital District cities (see Table 11), all cities compared had a decrease in population from 1990-2000, indicating that the urban centers of the Capital Region have seen a decline in population.

Table 1: Population Trends, 1990 - 2000				
Municipality	1990	2000	# Change	% Change
City of Watervliet	11,061	10,207	854	-7.7%
Albany County	292,594	294,565	1,971	0.7%
New York State	17,990,455	18,976,457	986,002	5.5%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000).

The City of Watervliet accounts for 3.5% of the County's overall population base (2000). Within the City, the ratio of male to female residents in 2000 was 47% male and 53% female. In 1990, 45% of the population in the City was male and 55% was female, changing the gender make-up of the City by two percent in that decade.

As the year 2000 was nearly a decade ago and 2010 Census population numbers are not yet available, population estimates for the year 2009 were obtained from Claritas, Inc., a private company that has been providing demographic data for marketing and other purposes for more than twenty years.¹ According to Claritas, the City of Watervliet's 2009 population is estimated at 9,686 (a 5.1% decrease from 2000 Census figures) with the 2014 population projected to decline to 9,409. Claritas estimates that the Albany County population for 2009 has increased by 1.7% and projects that it will continue to increase by an additional 0.9% by 2014. Based on 2009 Claritas estimates, Watervliet now accounts for 3.2% of the Albany County population base. The ratio of males to females was the same as in 2000 at 47.5% to 52.5%.



Watervliet's loss of population is of some concern as such trends can put neighborhoods at risk for increasing rates of abandonment, vacancy and absentee ownership of investment property. The municipal tax burden is distributed among fewer tax payers, threatening the delivery of basic city services.

¹ Claritas develops population estimates based on the most recent estimates produced by the Census Bureau at the national, state, and county levels. Population growth is then projected using forecasts provided by WEFA, an econometric forecasting firm. At smaller geographic levels, a variety of other sources, such as estimates from local agencies, household and consumer marketing databases, and other proprietary sources may also be used. While the estimates are useful for projections, it should be noted that the margin for error for small areas like small cities and census tracts is larger than for a state or region.

Table 2: Population Trends, 2000 – 2014

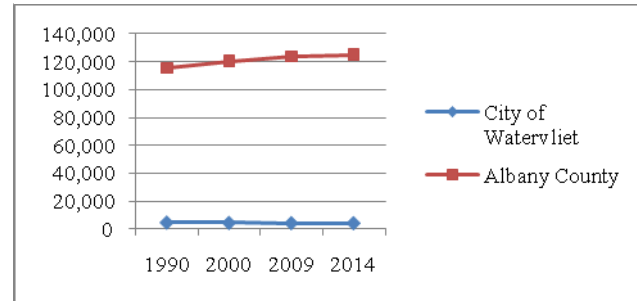
Municipality	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection	% Change 2000-09	% Change 2009-14
City of Watervliet	10,207	9,686	9,409	-5.1%	-2.9%
Albany County	294,565	299,616	302,404	1.7%	0.9%
New York State	18,976,457	19,327,336	19,526,283	1.9%	1.0%

Source: US Census Bureau (2000). Claritas Pop-Facts: Demographic Snapshot Report (2009).

Households

Change in the number of households can impact the overall demand for housing in a community. As defined by the Census Bureau, a household includes all persons who occupy a housing unit. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more persons living together, or any other group of related or unrelated individuals who share living arrangements outside an institution. The number of households in Watervliet is declining. The 2000 Census reports that there were 4,665 households in Watervliet, a decrease of 4.5% since 1990. The decline in the number of households is primarily due to the loss of population experienced by the City during the 1990's. In comparison, households increased 4.1% in Albany County and 6.3% in New York State as a whole. A decrease in households in Watervliet is likely related to the general loss of population in the City.

Household Trends



Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000) and Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC)

Table 3: Household Trends, 1990 – 2000

Municipality	1990	2000	# Change	% Change
City of Watervliet	4,885	4,665	220	-4.5%
Albany County	115,824	120,512	4,688	4.1%
New York State	6,639,322	7,056,860	417,538	6.3%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000)

The average household size in Watervliet has increased just slightly, from 2.26 to 2.32 persons per household. Claritas estimates the number of households in 2009 has decreased to 4,534 and will continue to decrease with 4,447 households projected in 2014. In Albany County Claritas estimates the number of households will increase by 2.7% by 2014.

Table 4: Household Trends, 2000 – 2014

Municipality	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection	% Change 2000-09	% Change 2009-14
City of Watervliet	4,665	4,534	4,447	-2.8%	-1.9%
Albany County	120,512	123,720	125,099	2.7%	1.1%
New York State	7,056,860	7,184,280	7,256,071	1.8%	1.0%

Source: US Census Bureau (2000). Claritas Pop-Facts: Demographic Snapshot Report (2009).

In 2000, approximately 32.9% of the households in the City of Watervliet were considered traditional nuclear families with a husband, wife and related children under the age of 18. This represents an 18.7% decrease in traditional nuclear families since 1990. Non-family households

including single-person households and households of unrelated persons (such as roommates or domestic partners) accounted for 45.4% of households, a 51.3% increase between 1990 and 2000. There was also a significant increase (27.9%) from 1990 to 2000 in the number of male headed households. In 2009, all household groups experienced declines, due to the overall population loss experienced by the City. Non-family households had the greatest decline at 33.4%.

Table 5: Households by Type, 1990 – 2009, City of Watervliet					
Type	1990	2000	2009	% Change, 1990-2000	% Change, 2000-2009
Married couple families	1,889 (38.7%)	1,535 (32.9%)	1,479 (32.6%)	-18.7%	-3.6%
Male headed household, no wife	190 (3.9%)	243 (5.2%)	237 (5.2%)	27.9%	-2.5%
Female headed household, no husband	747 (15.3%)	771 (16.5%)	744 (16.4%)	3.2%	-3.5%
Non-family households	2,059 (42.1%)	3,116 (45.4%)	2,074 (45.7%)	51.3%	-33.4%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000). Claritas Pop-Facts: Demographic Snapshot Report (2009).

To compare Watervliet to Albany County and the State as a whole, the 2000 Census reports that 46.6% of the households in the State were married couple family households compared with 49.9% in 1990. Claritas estimates for 2009 show that 46.8% of New York State households are married couple families. In Albany County, 43.2% of the households were married couple family households in 2000 compared with 47.1% in 1990. 2009 estimates for Albany County were similar to the 2000 Census figures.

Race

In 1990 the U.S. Census changed the way people were asked to report their race. Each respondent was asked to select whether he or she was Spanish, Hispanic or Latino in addition to other classic census categories. Because of this change, the 2000 data on race are not directly comparable with data from the 1990 or earlier censuses. Therefore, caution must be used when interpreting changes in the racial composition of the population over time.

Table 6: Race & Hispanic Origin, 1990-2009 City of Watervliet

Race	1990 Number	2000 Number	2009 Number	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2009
White	10,706 (96.8%)	9,197 (90.1%)	8,320 (85.9%)	-14.1%	-9.5%
Black	171 (1.5%)	355 (3.5%)	436 (4.5%)	107.6%	22.8%
American Indian	19 (0.2%)	13 (0.1%)	15 (0.2%)	-31.6%	15.4%
Asian or Pacific Islander	47 (0.4%)	132 (1.3%)	201 (2.1%)	180.9%	52.3%
Other Race	5 (0.1%)	26 (0.3%)	31 (0.3%)	420.0%	19.2%
Two or More Races	n/a	115 (1.1%)	152 (1.6%)	n/a	32.2%
Hispanic Origin	113 (1.0%)	369 (3.6%)	531 (5.5%)	226.5%	43.9%
<i>City of Watervliet</i>	<i>11,061</i>	<i>10,207</i>	<i>9,686</i>	<i>-7.7%</i>	<i>-5.1%</i>

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000). Claritas Pop-Facts: Demographic Snapshot Report (2009).

While the City's overall population is decreasing, the City is becoming more diverse. According to the 2000 Census, there are 1,010 minorities in the City of Watervliet comprising 9.9% of the population. The largest minority groups are the Hispanic and African American populations which comprise 71.7% of all minorities and 7.1% of the City's population. 2009 Estimates from Claritas for 2009 show the minority population is continuing to grow (an increase of 35.2% since 2000). All minority groups experienced double digit growth from 2000 to 2009.

Comparing surrounding areas, Albany County as a whole has a much larger proportional minority population at 16.8%. Albany County saw a 6% increase in minority population from 1990 to 2000, indicating it too has followed the Watervliet's trend in becoming more diverse.

Age

Between 1990 and 2000 all age groups, with the exception of adults between the ages of 45 to 64, experienced a decrease in population. Pre-school age children experienced the largest decline at 15.6%, followed by seniors at 13.6%. Adults (21-44), who account for 37.1% of the City's overall population, decreased 12.3% between 1990 and 2000. Claritas estimates show that all age groups with the exception of adults (45-64) are continuing to decline in 2009. The senior population experienced the largest decrease at 16.6% since the 2000 Census. Adults (45-64) experienced the only population increase among the age groups between 2000 and 2009. This age group is considered "peak earning years." The population concentration is an important characteristic of labor force availability and is a positive factor for the region.

The Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) also makes population projections. CDRPC has projected that in 2010 seniors will decrease 13% from 2000 and Adult residents (age range 20-64) will increase by 5% from 2000 to 2010.

Table 7: Age Characteristics, 1990 – 2009, City of Watervliet

Age	1990	2000	2009	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2009
Pre-School (0-4)	794 (7.2%)	670 (6.6%)	598 (6.2%)	-15.6%	-10.7%
School (5-20)	2,166 (19.6%)	2,135 (20.9%)	1,924 (19.9%)	-1.4%	-9.9%
Adult (21-44)	4,278 (38.7%)	3,752 (36.8%)	3,597 (37.1%)	-12.3%	-4.1%
Adult (45-64)	1,929 (17.4%)	2,014 (19.7%)	2,202 (22.7%)	4.4%	9.3%
Senior (65+)	1,894 (17.1%)	1,636 (16.0%)	1,365 (14.1%)	-13.6%	-16.6%
Total	11,061	10,207	9,686	-7.8%	-5.1%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000). Claritas Pop-Facts: Demographic Snapshot Report (2009).

The median age of the population of the City of Watervliet, according to the 2000 Census, was 35.3 years. Comparatively, the median age for Albany County and New York State were 36.8 and 35.9 respectively. According to 2009 Claritas estimates, the median age of Watervliet residents is 36.8 years. This compares to 35.3 in 2000, showing an aging of the County's population of 1.5 years in ten years' time.

Educational Attainment

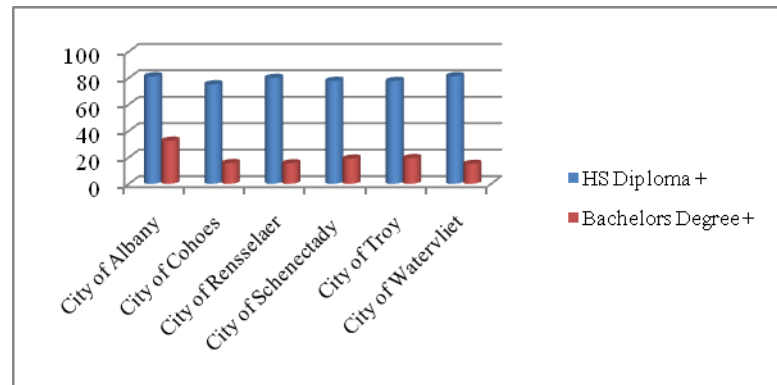
Watervliet's population is becoming more educated. Data gathered from the 2000 Census on educational attainment levels in Watervliet reveal that 81.3% of residents over the age of 25 have a high school diploma; this is 7.7% more of the resident population than in 1990. Albany County has a higher rate at 86.3; New York State has a slightly lower percentage of

high school graduates (79.1%). Reporting higher educational

attainment, 15% of Watervliet's residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, nearly a 50% increase over 1990; 33.3% of Albany County residents and 27.4% of New York State residents have a bachelor's degree or higher. The significant issue with respect to educational attainment is the shortage of residents with advanced degrees (15.0% in the City versus 33.3% in the County and 27.4% in the State). This relatively low educational attainment is a concern for economic development and business recruitment. Other job training methods may be required to ensure the local labor force remains competitive.

Information related to public and private schools in the City of Watervliet can be found in the *Government, Public Safety and Community Services* section of this document.

Educational Attainment Levels, Person 25+



Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000) and Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC)

Table 8: Educational Attainment Levels, Persons 25+, 1990-2009

Municipality	No High School Diploma			High School Diploma or higher			Bachelor's Degree or higher		
	1990	2000	2009	1990	2000	2009	1990	2000	2009
City of Watervliet	26.4%	18.7%	18.7%	73.6%	81.3%	81.3%	10.5%	15.0%	14.9%
Albany County	19.1%	13.6%	13.5%	80.9%	86.3%	86.5%	28.3%	33.3%	33.6%
New York State	25.2%	20.9%	21.2%	74.8%	79.1%	78.8%	23.1%	27.4%	27.3%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000). Claritas Pop-Facts: Demographic Snapshot Report (2009).

Capital District Cities Comparison

Comparing Watervliet to other cities within the Capital Region on key demographic areas, Watervliet is comparable to the trends of the Capital Region. Using 1990 and 2000 Census data, of the six cities compared (Albany, Schenectady, Troy, Cohoes, Watervliet and Rensselaer), all had decreases in population and number of households. Assessing educational attainment, Watervliet has the highest percentage of residents 25 years and older with a high school diploma. Studying those with a Bachelor's Degree, with the exception of the City of Albany at 32.5%, Watervliet is very similar to most of the other cities at 15%. The City of Albany falls in among the youngest in median years, whereas the City of Cohoes is the oldest. Watervliet falls in the middle for median age.

Table 9: Capital District Cities Comparison, 1990-2000

Municipality	Population Change (1990 – 2000)	Population Density (persons per square mile)	Household Change (1990-2000)	Median Age in years (2000)	High School Diploma (+25 years of age) (2000)	Bachelor's Degree (2000)
Albany	-5.3%	4,471	-3.4%	31.4	81.2%	32.5%
Schenectady	-5.7%	5,672	-5.3%	34.8	77.8%	19.0%
Troy	-9.4%	4,511	-3.7%	31.7	77.7%	19.4%
Cohoes	-7.8%	4,194	-2.8%	37.8	75.2%	15.6%
Watervliet	-7.7%	7,851	-4.5%	35.1	81.3%	15.0%
Rensselaer	-6.0%	2,587	-0.06%	35.8	80.0%	15.4%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000).

2009 estimates from Claritas show that although most populations have declined, the Cities of Albany and Rensselaer have experienced slight growth, at less than 1.0%. The City of Watervliet experienced the largest percentage population loss at 5.1% and households at 2.8%. Although Watervliet has the second highest percentage of persons (aged 25 and older) with a high school diploma, the City has the lowest percentage of persons with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Table 10: Capital District Cities Comparison 2000-2009						
Municipality	Population Change (2000 – 2009)	Population Density (persons per square mile)	Household Change (2000-2009)	Median Age in years (2009)	High School Diploma (+25 years of age) (2009)	Bachelor's Degree (2009)
Albany	0.7%	4,500	0.5%	33.6	81.5%	33.0%
Schenectady	-0.3%	5,658	-2.5%	35.5	78.0%	19.2%
Troy	-3.3%	4,572	-1.7%	33.5	78.1%	19.8%
Cohoes	-3.8%	4,036	-1.6%	39.0	75.5%	15.6%
Watervliet	-5.1%	7,451	-2.8%	36.8	81.3%	14.9%
Rensselaer	0.03%	2,588	1.8%	37.4	81.1%	16.1%

Source: US Census Bureau (2000). Claritas Pop-Facts: Demographic Snapshot Report (2009).

Housing

The Housing section of the Community Profile analyzes 2000 Census data and estimated 2009 Claritas Data (where available) for the City of Watervliet.

Key Observations:

- Vacancy rates have risen considerably from 1990 to 2000. According to the 2000 census the vacancy rental rates for the City were 8.4% and the owner vacancy rate was 2.0%. The higher vacancy rates are most likely attributed to the population decrease witnessed by Watervliet. From 1990 to 2000, the population decreased by 854 persons (7.7%).
- 60.9% of all housing units in the City were built prior to 1940.
- The affordability ratio of homeowner units has decreased from 2.47 to 2.24 between 2000 and 2009, indicating that homeowner units are becoming slightly more affordable. However, the fair market rents for the 3BR and 4BR are slightly higher than the rent that would be affordable to the average City resident.
- 32.2% of renter households and 18.2% of owner households are cost burdened – paying in excess of 30% of their income for housing costs.
- 12.6% of housing units in Watervliet are subsidized and the Watervliet Housing Authority reports lengthy waiting lists, particularly for their public housing units.
- Housing concerns identified by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee include absentee landlords, need for guidelines/standards for painting homes, property maintenance, and the need to improve rental housing.

General Housing Characteristics

According to the 2000 Census, the City of Watervliet has 5,116 housing units. Of the total housing units counted in the census, 4,665 were occupied. Owners make up 41.3% of the occupied housing in the City and renters 58.7%. The national homeowner rate was 66.2% and rental rate was 33.8% in 2000, while the New York State rate was 53.0% (homeowner) and 47% (renter).

The 2000 Census (the most recent data available on housing vacancies) also reports that the vacancy rate of for-sale housing in the City was about 2.0% and the vacancy rate for rental housing was 8.4%. In comparison, NYS and the US had slightly lower for-sale vacancy rates at 1.6% and 1.7% respectively. Rental vacancies were also lower at 4.6% (NYS) and 6.8% (U.S.)



Table 11: General Housing Characteristics, City of Watervliet					
	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Total Housing Units	5,145	100.0%	5,116	100.0%	-0.6%
Total Occupied Units	4,885	94.9%	4,665	91.2%	-4.5%
Owner occupied housing units	2,040	41.8%	1,926	41.3%	-5.6%
Renter occupied housing units	2,845	58.2%	2,739	58.7%	-3.7%
Vacant units	260	5.1%	451	8.8%	73.5%
Number and type of unit:					
Single family	1,253	24.4%	1,308	25.6%	4.4%
<i>Multi-Family Total</i>	3,804	73.9%	3,801	74.3%	-0.08%
Two-family	2,109	41.0%	2,048	40.0%	-2.9%
Three-and Four-family	835	16.2%	894	17.5%	7.1%
Apt Units of 5+	860	16.7%	859	16.8%	-0.1%
Mobile homes/trailers	1	0.02%	7	0.1%	600.0%
Other	87	1.7%	0	0.0%	-100.0%
Vacant for Sale	13	0.6%	40	2.0%	207.7%
Vacant for Rent	106	3.6%	252	8.4%	137.7%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000)

The predominant housing type in Watervliet is the multi-family structure, which makes up 74.3% of the City's housing stock. Single-family homes comprise 25.6% of the entire housing stock in the City. Mobile homes and trailers account for less than one percent. The 2000 Census reports that 46 housing units, less than 1.0% of the housing stock in Watervliet, was built during the 1990s. In contrast, 60.9% of the units were built before 1940, suggesting that without adequate maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation, overall housing conditions may decline.

In 2009, it is estimated that the City has 4,998 housing units, a loss of 2.3% of the housing stock since 2000. The breakdown between owner and renters was essentially the same in 2009 as in 2000.

Table 12: General Housing Characteristics, City of Watervliet

	2000		2009 estimate		% Change 2000-2009
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Total Housing Units	5,116	100.0%	4,998	100.0%	-2.3%
Total Occupied Units	4,665	91.2%	4,534	90.7%	-2.8%
Owner occupied housing units	1,926	41.3%	1,877	41.4%	-2.5%
Renter occupied housing units	2,739	58.7%	2,657	58.6%	-3.0%
Vacant units	451	8.8%	464	9.3%	2.9%
Number and type of unit:					
Single family	1,308	25.6%	1,277	25.5%	-2.4%
<i>Multi-Family Total</i>	<i>3,801</i>	<i>74.3%</i>	<i>3,715</i>	<i>74.3%</i>	<i>-2.3%</i>
Two-family	2,048	40.0%	2,014	40.3%	-1.6%
Apt Units of 3+	1,753	34.3%	1,701	34.0%	-3.0%
Mobile homes/trailers	7	0.1%	6	0.1%	-14.3%
Other	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Vacant for Sale	40	2.0%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vacant for Rent	252	8.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: US Census Bureau (2000) and Claritas (2009)

Characteristics of Rental Housing

Rental housing accounts for 58.7% of occupied housing in the City of Watervliet according to 2000 Census figures. Nearly one-third of the City's rental units are one-bedroom. In comparison, 29.5% are three-bedroom and 28.9% are two-bedroom. Approximately 63.1% of rental units are in two, three and four family structures.

The median gross rent in Watervliet was \$422 in 1990. Adjusting the 1990 median rent for inflation to 2000 dollars results in a median rent of \$556. The 2000 Census reports that the City has a median gross rent of \$558. Rental costs have increased by less than one percent in comparison to 1990 figures when adjusted for inflation.



One factor in assessing general housing needs within a community is the availability of housing choice. A healthy housing market should provide sufficient opportunities to its residents to secure good quality units that address their particular needs in terms of number of bedrooms, location, price and other considerations. The generally accepted standards for measuring availability in a healthy housing market are vacancy rates in the area of 5% for rental units and 1% for purchase housing. In 1990 the rental vacancy rate was below the norm at 3.6%, indicating a tight rental housing market. However, the City's vacancy rate for rental housing in 2000 was above the norm at 8.4%.

The needs of lower income households can best be understood by examining the numbers of cost burdened households in the City of Watervliet by income range and tenure. Cost burden is defined as the extent to which gross housing costs exceeds 30% of gross income, based on data published by the Census Bureau.

Table 13. Cost Burdened Rental Households					
	Number of Households by Income Range				
	Total	Under \$10,000	\$10,000 - \$19,999	\$20,000-\$34,999	Over \$35,000
Selected Renter-Occupied Units	2,740	421	658	681	980
<i>% of renter households</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>15.4%</i>	<i>24.0%</i>	<i>24.9%</i>	<i>35.8%</i>
Renters paying over 30% of income for rent	881	300	392	174	15
<i>% cost burdened</i>	<i>32.2%</i>	<i>71.3%</i>	<i>59.6%</i>	<i>25.6%</i>	<i>1.5%</i>
Income range as a % of cost burdened households	100.0%	34.1%	44.5%	19.8%	1.7%

Source: 2000 Census.

According to 2000 Census information, 881 households in Watervliet reported rental housing costs in excess of 30% of income. This represented 32.2% of all renter households. Not surprisingly, the extent of cost burden was significantly greater on lower income households. Households with annual incomes under \$20,000 accounted for 692, or 64.1%, of the households determined to be cost burdened.

Assisted Housing

A small portion of the rental housing within the City of Watervliet is provided through subsidized funding sources such as the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (NYSDHCR). There are 643 subsidized units located in Watervliet (12.6% of total units based on the 2000 Census). General characteristics of these units are presented in the table below.

The Watervliet Housing Authority (WHA) provides subsidized housing units through public housing and section 8 housing choice vouchers. There are a total of 307 public housing units provided in five housing projects in the City. Additionally, the WHA also manages units at Van Rensselaer Village for a private firm. Van Rensselaer Village is the largest subsidized housing facility with 100 units for both seniors and families. The largest public housing facility is the Day Apartments with 90 units. The Housing Authority currently maintains a waiting list of 1,464 households.

The Housing Authority also manages the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program which provides rental assistance to households to rent apartments owned by private landlords. WHA currently assists 100 families through this program, the majority of whom are non-elderly. There is waiting list of 346 families (16 elderly and 330 non-elderly) for the voucher program.

Table 13: Subsidized Housing Facility Inventory

Facility	Total Units	0BR	1BR	2BR	3BR	4+BR	Subtotal Elderly	Subtotal Non-Elderly
Hudson Shores Apartments	136	0	136	0	0	0	136	0
Van Rensselaer Village	100	0	28	34	28	10	n/a	n/a
Day Apartments	90	0	6	46	34	4	0	90
Hilton Apartments	30	0	17	4	8	1	0	30
Quinn Apartments	60	0	60	0	0	0	60	0
Joslin Apartments	58	0	0	18	36	4	0	58
Hanratta Apartments	69	0	69	0	0	0	69	0
Totals	543	0	316	102	106	19	265	178

Source: US Department of HUD and NYS DHCR

Characteristics of Owner Occupied Housing

There are 1,926 owner-occupied units in the City, comprising 41.3% of occupied housing in the City in 2000. The majority of these units are in single-family, three-bedroom structures. According to 2000 Census figures, the vacancy rate of for-sale housing is 2.0%, slightly higher than the standard of 1% in a healthy market.

The Census asks respondents to list the value of their home. The median value of owner-occupied homes in Watervliet in 1990 was \$81,400. Adjusting the 1990 median value for inflation to 2000 dollars projects a 2000 median value of \$107,246 for owner-occupied units. The actual median value reported by the Census in 2000 for owner-occupied units is only \$84,300. Owner housing in the city is losing market value at a dramatic rate. The consequences of this trend are very significant since Watervliet's residential properties generate 69.6% of the City's taxable value. The trend also affects market, rental income rates, desirability of homeownership and access to capital for property improvements.



Table 14: Cost Burdened Owner Households

	Number of Households by Income Range				
	Total	Under \$10,000	\$10,000-\$19,999	\$20,000-\$34,999	Over \$35,000
Selected Owner-Occupied Units	1,000	52	120	144	684
% of owner households	100.0%	5.2%	12.0%	14.4%	68.4%
Owners paying over 30% of income for housing.	182	24	46	44	68
% cost burdened	18.2%	46.2%	38.3%	30.6%	9.9%
Income range as a % of cost burdened households	100.0%	13.2%	25.3%	24.2%	37.4%

Source: 2000 Census.

Like renter households, homeowners are also cost burdened. The 2000 Census reports that 182 or 18.2% of all homeowners are cost burdened, paying more than 30% of family income for housing. Households with annual incomes under \$20,000 accounted for 70, or 38.5%, of the households determined to be cost burdened, while households with incomes over \$35,000 accounted for 37.4% of all cost burdened households.

For-Sale Housing Market

A listing of homes for sale was obtained through the Capital Region Multiple Listing Service (via <http://reny.net/mls-real-estate-listings.html>). Combined, there were 20 single-family homes, 9 two-family homes and 8 multi-family homes listed in the City of Watervliet on September 21, 2010. The median asking price of the single-family homes was \$119,900. There were 9 three-bedroom units with a median asking price of \$148,000. Additionally, there were 5 two-bedroom units (median asking price of \$95,900) and 6 four-bedroom units (median asking price of \$140,200) available. Further, there are 9 two-family homes listed with a median asking price of \$125,000 and 8 multi-family homes (three family or more) listed with a median asking price of \$179,450. The median asking price per unit in the two-family homes was \$62,500, while the median asking price per unit for multi-family homes was \$50,804.

Table 15: Multiple Listing Service – Homes for Sale in Watervliet			
Type of Housing	Total	Median Sales Price Per Structure	Median Sales Price Per Unit
Single Family Homes	20	\$119,900	\$119,900
▪ 2 bedrooms	5	\$95,900	\$95,900
▪ 3 bedrooms	9	\$148,000	\$148,000
▪ 4 bedrooms or more	6	\$140,200	\$140,200
Two-Family Homes	9	\$125,000	\$62,500
Multi-Family Homes	8	\$179,450	\$50,804

Source: Capital Region Multiple Listing Service (September 21, 2010).

Housing Affordability

Housing Rental Index

Rental housing is generally defined as affordable for a household if it does not cost more than 30 percent of the occupant's annual income on housing costs (housing costs include basic utilities). One measure of affordability is a rental index that calculates the maximum gross rent a household can afford. With a median household income of \$32,910 in 2000, the average household could afford \$823 per month in rent. With a median gross rent of \$422, the average household in Watervliet would find rentals to be affordable.

Table 16: Housing Rental Index, City of Watervliet			
Year	Median Gross Rent (2000)/FMR (2008)	Median Household Income (2000)	Affordable Rent (30% of Average Monthly Income)
2000	\$422	\$32,910	\$823
2009	\$868 – 2BR \$1,039 – 3BR \$1,135 – 4BR	\$37,690	\$942

Source: US Census Bureau (2000), Claritas (2009), US Dept. of Housing & Urban Development.

According to estimates from Claritas, the estimated median household income for City residents was \$37,690 in 2008. This translates to a monthly income of \$3141 for the average City household. Therefore, City households are estimated to be able to reasonably afford \$942 for rent. According to the U.S Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment in the Albany-Schenectady-Troy MSA in FY2009 is \$868. The FMR for three-bedroom units is \$1,039 while for a four-bedroom unit the FMR is \$1,135. Fair Market Rent is an amount determined by HUD to be the cost of modest, non-luxury rental units in a specific market area. At the 2BR FMR rent of \$868 per month (in 2009), a minimum annual income of \$34,720 would be required by a household to afford a typical 2BR unit at 30% of income. Based on the fair market rents for the 2BR unit, the average household in Watervliet would find rentals to be affordable. However, the fair market rents for the 3BR and 4BR are slightly higher than the rent that would be affordable to the average City resident.



Ownership Units Affordability Ratio

In order to determine the affordability of homeowner units, a comparison is made between the median value of homeowner units and median household income. Nationally, a ratio of 2.0 or less is considered “affordable”. For instance, for a home costing \$200,000 to be affordable the household should earn an income of \$100,000 to achieve a ratio of 2.0. The affordability ratio for the City of Watervliet equals \$81,400 (median value of homes) divided by \$32,910 (median household income). In 2000 the affordability ratio was 2.47 for the City. Therefore in 2000, homes in Watervliet exceeded basic affordability standards. Based on 2009 estimates on median house value and household income, the affordability ratio was 2.24, which still exceeds basic affordability standards, but the trend is moving toward more affordability.

Table 17: Housing Affordability		
City of Watervliet	2000	Estimated 2009
Median house value	\$81,400	\$84,300
Median Household income	\$32,910	\$37,690
Affordability Ratio	2.47	2.24

Source: US Census Bureau (2000) and Claritas (2009).

Housing Focus Group Meeting

As part of the Comprehensive Plan, a focus group meeting was held on January 27, 2010 with housing providers. Representatives included the Watervliet Housing Authority, landlords, realtors, developers, City Staff, and Planning Board members. A number of needs and issues were identified by participants. Major concerns include the following:

- Water and sewer rates and taxes have gone up and landlords cannot raise rents accordingly. [The City is currently studying metering individual units, which will take about one year.]
- Landlords are having problems finding tenants willing to rent units in Watervliet, as well as finding decent tenants.
- The Housing Authority currently gets 50-75 applications a month and has no vacancies. Now there is more need for affordable housing than ever. Turnover is less than 10% year – only 3 apartments become available per month.

- The City is going to see a lot of foreclosures this year (6 coming up in February 2010); although compared to neighboring communities the foreclosure rate is very modest.
- Domestic violence is a big problem in Watervliet; there is a need for prevention programs.
- There is a problem with absentee landlords.
- Quality of housing stock is an issue. Housing is not up to date in terms of new construction.
- Code enforcement has been good at reducing conversions, but cannot impact small bedroom sizes, old style kitchens and bathrooms.
- For some areas, schools sell the community. There is a need to promote the positive things that the schools are doing for the community (i.e. the large number of high school graduates going to college).
- Closing of local churches and what will happen with these buildings in the future increases residential uncertainty.
- There are many nonconforming lots in the City; the land use pattern is inconsistent.
- Better design standards are needed for commercial buildings.

A meeting was also held with City Department Heads on February 4, 2010 in which they were asked what they thought needed to be addressed in the City's Comprehensive Plan. With regard to housing, the following were identified:

- There are housing stock and code enforcement issues. It is important to upgrade and protect the existing housing stock and also limit conversions of single family/two family dwellings into multiple units.
- Identify types of housing not available in City to put into play as residences for Arsenal EUL employees in the future.
- The goal is to fill every home in Watervliet with good homeowners and good tenants for the second and third units. However, if every home was occupied, there would be a parking problem because homes are built on small lots.
- The Code Enforcement Department is doing a lot more now (inspecting apartments more; enforcing code elements for property exteriors as well). Property maintenance and enforcement has changed in Watervliet.
- Implementing a facade program and housing rehabilitation program was suggested.
- On February 3, 2010 the City of Watervliet Local Development Corporation approved a first time home buyer program. In cooperation with funding from the Albany County Executive, the program will assist about 30 people to buy homes in the City.

The Local Economy

The Local Economy section of the Community Profile analyzes 2000 Census data and estimated 2009 Claritas Data (where available) for the City of Watervliet.

Key Observations:

- The Albany County Empire Zone provided significant economic incentives to businesses that are located within the zone boundaries, which includes the Arsenal.
- The Watervliet Arsenal still serves as a major employer in the City.
- As developer of the Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) Program at the Arsenal, the Arsenal Business and Technology Partnership is charged with attracting high-tech companies to the Arsenal and creating private sector jobs.
- Nearly two-thirds of the working age population in Watervliet participated in the civilian labor force in 2000.
- 38.1% of Watervliet residents who were employed in 2000 worked in the service sector, including 971 (19.1%) in educational, health care and social services. An additional 15.1% of employed residents worked in the retail sector. Thirteen percent of residents worked in public administration.
- Median incomes in the City of Watervliet have actually decreased during the past decade, after adjusting for inflation.
- Watervliet contains a significant proportion of low and moderate income households (64.0%).
- The Census reports 13.2% of residents live below the poverty level. Only 10.6% of Albany County residents live below the poverty level.



Watervliet Yesterday and Today

Known as the “Arsenal City”, Watervliet’s economy has strong ties to the manufacturing and “defense” industry. The roots of the Watervliet Arsenal date back to 1813. Chosen as the site for a supply and storage arsenal by the U.S. Army, the Watervliet Arsenal is the oldest continuously active arsenal in the United States and is known as a manufacturer of tank cannon, howitzers and battleship guns. The complex includes 72 buildings with 1.2 million square feet of manufacturing space on 140 acres, mostly located in the City of Watervliet.

Until recently employment levels at the Arsenal generally rose during wartime and fell during times of peace. The greatest expansion of the Arsenal occurred during World War II. At the beginning of



1941, there were 3,000 employees; a year later, at its peak of employment, the workforce had grown to 9,400.

In the 1950s and 60s, overall employment declined as the Arsenal began to feel the pinch of post-war defense reductions and the trend away from mass production of weapons and toward development of new technology. However, research and engineering capabilities at the Watervliet Arsenal flourished during the Korean War, and in 1962 the Army established the Benet Laboratories, a major research facility, at the Arsenal.

Today the roughly 600 people employed at the Arsenal produce high tech, high powered weaponry. Artillery remains the principal product of the Watervliet Arsenal. Further, public-private partnerships have allowed small-to-large on-site technology companies to broaden the portfolio with research and engineering in composites, nanomaterials and electronics.

Labor Force Characteristics

The civilian labor force in Watervliet consists of residents aged 16 and older who are employed or who are actively seeking employment, excluding those enrolled in the armed forces. Claritas estimates for 2009 report that 4,872 residents (62.8%) of Watervliet's population over the age of 16 were employed. The unemployment rate for the City was 2.9%, which was lower than both Albany County (4.5%) and New York State (4.4%). More recent data for the City is not available; however, current regional unemployment data is generated by the New York State Department of Labor. The Department of Labor data is not derived from the same data that Claritas uses to determine unemployment rates; therefore Census and Department of Labor data cannot be compared. Nonetheless, the Department of Labor statistics for January 2010 indicate that Albany County has an unemployment rate of 7.3% reflecting the current economic downturn affecting the entire Country. In comparison, the average annual unemployment rate for the County had been climbing slowly from 3.3% in 2000, to 3.9% in 2007 and 6.7% in 2009. The unemployment rate for New York State was 4.5% in 2000 and 4.5% in 2007; in 2009 the unemployment rate rose to 8.4%.

Table 18: Labor Force Data, 2009 estimate

Employment	City of Watervliet	Albany County	New York State
Population 16 Years & Over	7,760	246,958	15,478,018
In the Labor Force	5,119 (66.0%)	163,261 (66.1%)	61.3%
Civilian Labor Force	5,100 (65.7%)	162,964 (66.0%)	61.1%
Employed	4,872 (62.8%)	151,744 (61.5%)	56.7%
Unemployed	228 (2.9%)	11,220 (4.5%)	4.4%
Armed Forces	19 (0.2%)	297 (0.1%)	0.2%
Not In Labor Force	2,641 (34.0%)	83,697 (33.9%)	38.8%

Source: Claritas (2009)

According to the 2000 Census, 38.1% of Watervliet residents² who are employed work in the service sector (Table 19), including 971 (19.1%) in educational, health, and social services. Approximately 15.1% of Watervliet workers are employed in the retail trade sector, while 13.0% work in public administration. A direct comparison between 1990 and 2000 to identify shifts in

² The data in Tables 19 and 20 refer to the jobs held by Watervliet residents, *not* the number or distribution of jobs actually based in the City. Information on industry relates to the kind of business conducted by the resident's employer.

employment cannot be made with regard to service-related industries because the census altered the definition of industry categories between the decennial census periods. Nonetheless, it is clear that the majority of employment for Watervliet residents remains in the services industries. According to the 1990 Census, 29.1% of Watervliet residents were employed in services, followed by retail trade (16.7%), public administration (16.0%) and manufacturing (13.5%). Between 1990 and 2000 persons employed in manufacturing have dropped 39.9% citywide; employment in the public administration industry declined 23.4%.

Table 19: Resident Employment by Industry, 2000

Industry	City of Watervliet		Albany County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture, Forestry and Mining	3	0.1%	415	0.3%
Construction	230	4.5%	6,413	4.4%
Manufacturing	437	8.6%	8,229	5.7%
Wholesale Trade	194	3.8%	3,719	2.6%
Retail Trade	765	15.1%	15,069	10.4%
Transportation and Warehousing and Utilities	195	3.8%	6,252	4.3%
Information	132	2.6%	4,356	3.0%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and rental leasing	522	10.3%	11,565	8.0%
Professional Services	329	6.5%	12,808	8.9%
Educational, Health and Social Services	971	19.1%	35,963	24.9%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	367	7.2%	10,330	7.1%
Other Services (except public administration)	269	5.3%	7,219	5.0%
Public administration	661	13.0%	22,142	15.3%
Total	5,075	100.0%	144,480	100.0%

Source: US Census Bureau (2000)

According to 2009 Claritas estimates 4,872 civilian City residents were employed. The most common occupations were *sales and office occupations* (35.0%), *management, professional and related occupations* (26.1%) and *service occupations* (18.0%).

Table 20: Resident Employment by Occupation, 2009 estimate

Occupation	City of Watervliet		Albany County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Management, professional and related occupations	1,272	26.1%	64,588	42.6%
Service occupations	875	18.0%	20,826	13.7%
Sales and office occupations	1,704	35.0%	43,831	28.9%
Farming, fishing and forestry occupations	0	0.0%	180	0.1%
Construction, Extraction and maintenance occupations	389	8.0%	9,361	6.2%
Production, transportation and material moving occupations	632	13.0%	12,958	8.5%
Total	4,872	100.0%	151,744	100.0%

Source: Claritas (2009)

Journey to Work

81% of City residents work in Albany County according to the 2000 Census. The most common mode of transportation is by car, truck or van (83.1%) while 8.5% of residents use public transportation and 4.3% walk to work. Of the 4,806 residents that travel outside the home for work, 57.4% travel less than 19 minutes to work, with 21.3% (this being the most common travel time) traveling 15-19 minutes. 34.6% of City workers travel 20 to 34 minutes to work.

Industry Mix

The Economic Census is prepared by the US Bureau of Census every five years. It does not include public administration industries including public institutions and government industries. As the table below indicates, there were 112 business establishments in the City of Watervliet in 2002. Most businesses were in the services and retail trade sector. The Census Bureau is still in the process of releasing data related to the 2007 Economic Census.

Table 21: Industry Mix, City of Watervliet (2002 and 2007)									
		Number of Establishments		Number Employed		Sales/receipts Shipments (\$1,000)		Annual Payroll (\$1,000)	
NAICS Industry Code	Industry Description	2002	2007	2002	2007	2002	2007	2002	2007
	Manufacturing	14		611		\$88,669		\$27,185	
42	Wholesale Trade	4	6	40	b	\$5,976	N/A	\$1,547	N/A
44-45	Retail Trade	33	34	353	349	\$47,844	\$58,633	\$5,520	\$6,443
51	Information	1	1	a	a	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
53	Real estate & rental & leasing	5	7	b	31	N/A	\$9,121	N/A	\$828
54	Professional, scientific, & technical services	9		c		N/A		N/A	
56	Admin. & support/waste manage.& remediation	4		a		N/A		N/A	
61	Educational Services	0		0		0		0	
62	Health care & social assistance	10		63		\$4675		\$1,851	
71	Arts, entertainment & recreation	1	2	a	a	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
72	Accommodation & food service	18	23	141	252	\$5,855	\$6,251	\$1,773	\$1,843
81	Other services (except public administration)	13	12	54	61	\$3,588	\$4,686	\$984	\$1,115
<i>N/A: Data is withheld by Census to avoid disclosing data of individual companies; a: 0-19 employees; b: 20-99 employees; c: 100-249 employees Source: US Bureau of the Census, Economic Census (2002)</i>									

Retail Trade

The most recent sales data available for the City of Watervliet is from the US Bureau of Census in the 2007 Economic Census. The following analysis reviews Watervliet's retail trade industry between 2002 and 2007 and provides a detailed analysis of the performance of the mix of stores. For purposes of this analysis, "retail-related" refers to all types of retail included in the Economic Census of Retail Trade as well as eating and drinking establishments which the US Census Bureau no longer includes in the Census of Retail Trade, and instead includes in the Census of Accommodations and Foodservices. In 2002, retail-related sales in Albany County amounted to approximately \$4,499.4 million. Of this amount, \$35.9 million originated in the City of Watervliet. There were 51 retail establishments in the City of Watervliet according to the 2002 Census of Retail Trade. The most common type of retail-related business was eating and drinking establishments which comprised nearly one-third of all retail businesses in Watervliet in 2002. There were also 9 gasoline stations and 5 food and beverage stores.



In 2007, there were 57 retail establishments in the City of Watervliet. Similar to 2002, the most common retail business is the eating and drinking establishments, which accounts for 40% of all retail businesses in the City. The table below provides a more detailed breakdown of the types of retail stores found in the City.

Table 22: Retail Trade, City of Watervliet (2002 and 2007)

Type of Business	2002			2007		
	Stores	Sales (1,000s)	Employed	Stores	Sales (1,000s)	Employed
Motor Vehicle and Parts	3	\$2,706	20	3	N/A	a
Furniture and Home Furnishings	1	N/A	a	1	N/A	a
Electronics and Appliances	2	N/A	a	2	N/A	a
Building Materials, Garden Equipment, Supplies	2	N/A	a	4	\$1,944	19
Food and Beverage Stores	5	\$17,340	131	9	\$19,764	163
Health and Personal Care Stores	2	N/A	b	2	N/A	b
Gasoline Stations	9	\$7,077	43	7	14,643	29
Clothing and Accessories	1	N/A	a	1	N/A	a
General Merchandise Stores	3	\$2,289	18	1	N/A	a
Miscellaneous Stores	3	\$695	9	2	N/A	a
Non-store Retailers	2	N/A	b	2	N/A	b
Eating/Drinking Places	18	\$5,855	141	23	\$6,251	252
Total	51	\$35,962	362	57	\$62,884	601

Source: Economic Census of Retail Trade, Accommodations and Foodservices (2002)

N/A: Data is withheld by Census to avoid disclosing data of individual companies;

b: 20 to 99 employees; c: 100 to 249 employees;

Income Levels

Personal income is one of the most important indicators of the economy and one of the most important variables in creating a vibrant community for the future. Understanding the income

characteristics of the community is also important in determining the community's wealth as well as the ability of residents to maintain housing, contribute to the local tax base, and participate in the economy.

According to the 2000 Census, the median household income for the City of Watervliet was \$32,910 and per capita income was \$18,294. Albany County had a higher median household income of \$42,935 (30.5% higher than the City) and per capita income of \$23,345 (27.6% higher than the City). Further, 1,348 or 13.2% of City residents are living below the poverty level. This number is higher than that of Albany County (10%), and lower than New York State as a whole (14.6%).

According to Claritas, the estimated median household income in 2009 for the City was \$37,690 and the median family income was \$47,209. 12.3% of Watervliet families are estimated to be living below the poverty line.

Income data collected from the census reflects the income levels of the previous year in which the census is taken in order to obtain an accurate survey of annual income. To gain a better understanding of changes in income between the censuses taken in 1990 and 2000, 1990 (based on 1989 income) Census income data was converted to 1999 dollars using the consumer price indices of 1989 and 1999 as calculated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics to calculate an inflation rate, 34.4% over the 10 year period. As Table 23 indicates, when year 1989 incomes in the City of Watervliet were adjusted for inflation, median household income decreased 5.2% from 1989 to 1999 and median family income decreased 14.2%. Per capita income increased 4.5%. In comparison, Albany County's median household income decreased by 4.2% and median family income increased by 1.3%. Per capita income in Albany County increased by 6.2%.

Table 23: Household Income and Poverty Rate Comparison						
	City of Watervliet (1989)	Adjusted* City of Watervliet (1989)	City of Watervliet (1999)	Albany County (1989)	Adjusted* Albany County (1989)	Albany County (1999)
Median Household Income	\$25,852	\$34,733	\$32,910	\$33,358	\$44,818	\$42,935
Median Family Income	\$33,616	\$45,165	\$38,735	\$41,670	\$55,986	\$56,724
Per Capita Income	\$13,007	\$17,476	\$17,476	\$16,363	\$21,984	\$23,345
Individuals Below Poverty Level	1,174 (10.7%)	n/a	1,348 (13.3%)	27,031 (9.7%)	n/a	29,745 (10.6%)
Families Below Poverty Level	264 (9.2%)	n/a	317 (12.3%)	4,292 (6.0%)	n/a	5,104 (7.2%)

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000). For purposes of comparison, 1989 dollars have been adjusted for inflation to 1999 dollars.

Table 24 below compares income statistics between 1999 and 2009 for the City of Watervliet and Albany County. After adjusting 1999 incomes for inflation, median household, median family and per capita income decline for both the City of Watervliet and Albany County in 2009.

Table 24: Household Income and Poverty Rate Comparison

	City of Watervliet (1999)	Adjusted* City of Watervliet (1999)	City of Watervliet (2009)	Albany County (1999)	Adjusted* Albany County (1999)	Albany County (2009)
Median Household Income	\$32,910	\$42,379	\$37,690	\$42,935	\$55,289	\$53,533
Median Family Income	\$38,735	\$49,881	\$47,209	\$56,724	\$73,046	\$71,793
Per Capita Income	\$17,476	\$22,504	\$21,172	\$23,345	\$30,062	\$29,441
Individuals Below Poverty Level	1,348 (13.3%)	n/a	n/a	29,745 (10.6%)	n/a	n/a
Families Below Poverty Level	317 (12.3%)	n/a	302 (12.3%)	5,104 (7.2%)	n/a	5,242 (7.2%)

Source: US Census Bureau (2000). Claritas (2009). For purposes of comparison, 1999 dollars have been adjusted for inflation to 2009 dollars.

The City of Watervliet has a significant proportion of low and moderate income households. Census figures indicate that 64.0% of households in the City in 2000 were considered low and moderate income households (i.e., households with income less than 80 percent of the Albany-Schenectady-Troy MSA median) as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Further, 40.6% of households in the City were very low income, earning 50% or less of the Albany-Schenectady-Troy, NY MSA median family income. In comparison, in 2000 49.6% of County residents were low and moderate income households and 30.6% were very low income. In 2009, nearly three-quarters of Watervliet households were low and moderate income and about one-half of households were very low income. In comparison, in 2009 39.6% of Albany County households were low and moderate income and 20.7% of Albany County households were very low income.

Local Economic Development Organizations and Programs

Albany County Empire Zone

The Albany County Empire Zone was approved by New York State in 1998 to attract private commercial business development at the Watervliet Arsenal. The program offered benefits that can reduce the cost of doing business for companies that locate on site and invest in new equipment and jobs. Companies could reduce or eliminate taxes for up to ten years with the following benefits: Stock Market Corporate Income Tax Credits, Wage Tax Credits, Investment Tax Credits, Sales Tax Exemptions, Sales Tax Refunds, Zone Capital Tax Credits and Low Interest Loans. The Empire Zone program was replaced in 2010 by the Excelsior Program, whose details are forthcoming.



Arsenal Business and Technology Partnership

Created in 1999 by the Capital Region's government, business and education leaders, the Arsenal Business and Technology Partnership mission is to transform portions of the Watervliet Arsenal

site into a center for technological and business excellence. The partnership is the exclusive economic development agent for the site and provides assistance with all location services, interface with the Arsenal and Benet labs, economic development assistance and problem solving. Recently the Partnership was selected as the developer of the Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) Program at the Watervliet Arsenal. 63 acres of underutilized land was released by the U.S. Army for development by private companies under the EUL Program. Key objectives of the development plan include expanding the campus to 550,000 square feet of building space for manufacturing, office, research and development and high-tech companies; creating 1,000 new private-sector jobs; and providing more opportunities for public-private business partnerships.

Watervliet Innovation Center

The Watervliet Innovation Center is a program of the Center for Economic Growth (CEG). CEG is a private, not-for-profit, economic development organization seeking to bolster the economy of the Capital Region of New York State by promoting growth of technology-based businesses. The Innovation Center utilizes business, technology and market expertise to aid the rapid expansion of homeland security, national security and defense technology companies. The Center provides a platform of shared services, as well as intensive custom services, to help each business grow, connecting companies to a nationwide network of industry advisors, including funders, end-users, service professionals and technical experts. The Center is located within the Watervliet Arsenal Campus, co-located with the US Army's Benet Labs and an Army Material Command (AMC) manufacturing center.

Watervliet Local Development Corporation

The City of Watervliet Local Development Corporation is a not-for-profit public benefit corporation of the State of New York. The Corporation was formed under the provisions of section 1411 of the Not-For-Profit Corporation Law of New York State.

The Corporation operates in the City of Watervliet for the exclusively charitable or public purposes of relieving and reducing unemployment, promoting and providing for additional and maximum employment, bettering and maintaining job opportunities, instructing or training individuals to improve or develop their capabilities for such jobs, carrying on scientific research for the purpose of aiding the City by attracting new industry to the community or area or by encouraging the development of, or retention of, an industry in the City, and lessening the burdens of government and acting in the public interest.

In furtherance of its purposes, the Corporation can undertake a wide variety of activities to aid the economic and social life of the City of Watervliet. The Corporation was created in 1999. Its first project was to serve as the local advisory committee for the economic rehabilitation activities on Nineteenth Street. In 2009 the Corporation received a grant from the Albany County Executive to undertake the Watervliet Apartment Management Program which has been amended into the First Time Home Buyer Program.



Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce

The Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce is an organization that works to improve business by providing networking opportunities, health insurance programs, cost-saving benefits and other services and programs. Services and programs include loan programs (MicroLoan Program, Al Tech Loan Fund, Technology Acceleration Fund and Financing Resources) and Entrepreneurial Assistance Program (EAP). EAP provides business assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs, increases the formation of new businesses and strengthens operation of businesses during early stages of development. Services include classroom instruction and one-on-one counseling, peer support groups and business mentoring from experienced business owners who have been through the ups and downs of starting and running a business. Entrepreneurs learn business skills and how to develop a business plan.

Focus Group Meeting

A meeting was held with the City Department Heads on February 4, 2010 at which the department heads were asked what they thought needed to be addressed in the City's Comprehensive Plan. With regard to economic development, the following were identified:

- There are a lot of small new businesses in Watervliet and new businesses are always fragile. We do not want to discourage new businesses from establishing in Watervliet.
- Tech Valley Printing Building is now almost empty; the City is trying to make something happen there.
- Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) Program makes more than 60 acres at the Watervliet Arsenal available to the private sector. The local economy is so bad right now, but one day this opportunity will be good for the City because it will essentially put tax-exempt properties on the tax roll that have never been taxable in 200 years.
- 2 potential projects:
 - Cogeneration Facility: will provide in excess of \$100,000 each year to the City with the significant upgrade of the existing power plant.
 - Data Processing Center: planned but is in competition with Amsterdam (as a site location). The City needs the Data Processing Center for the Cogen facility to move forward.

Real Estate Tax Base Analysis

Key Observations:

- 51.6% of the City's land area is dedicated to residential uses including single and multi-family homes. Public services make up an additional 18.0% of the City's land uses, while Community Services occupy 10% of the land area in Watervliet. Only 3.3% of the City's land use (19.5 acres) is Vacant Land. All other categories of land use combined make up the balance of 16.6%, with no other category occupying more than 7.5% of the available land.
- An imbalance exists between the percentage of land in residential use (51.6%) and the taxable value that this land contributes (82%) in Watervliet. Residents use only 51.6% of the land, but contribute 82 cents of every dollar raised through property taxes.
- Commercial and industrial properties also contribute positively to the tax base compared to their acreage, although they comprise only a small portion of city-wide land uses.
- Owners of single family homes occupy only 23% of the City's acreage but pay 34 cents of every dollar raised through property taxes. Similarly, two family homes comprise 18% of the acreage in the City but owners of these properties pay 31 cents of every dollar raised through property taxes.
- 55% of the City's property value is tax exempt.

From the perspective of municipal administration, a community's tax base drives its ability to invest in amenities and provide quality professional services that residents expect. From the citizen's perspective, tax burden influences where people buy homes, whether they reinvest in property and where they develop businesses. The municipality's ability to raise revenue to provide infrastructure and services is affected by its tax base. The existing and future real estate of the municipality provides opportunities and constraints for maintaining and attracting homeowners, businesses and jobs.



In many communities the key to economic stability or growth is to optimize the tax base by making every acre of land as productive as it can be without compromising community vitality or natural resources. Today there are many tools available to communities to enhance, diversify and optimize their tax base. This analysis provides the basis for identifying those actions.

Understanding existing land use patterns, property ownership, number of parcels, amount of land and configuration of potential redevelopment areas are key to understanding future development potential and enhancement strategies. Existing data sources and field study document the existing development patterns and concentrations, zoning designations, design requirements and other land use regulations.

This element of the Community Profile includes an analysis of the tax base based on computerized assessment records. Assessment data on agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial and public

properties are analyzed in order to quantify the contribution these uses make to the community's tax base.

Watervliet Real Estate Tax Base

The following section presents a preliminary analysis of the general characteristics of Watervliet's tax base by major use categories as classified for assessment purposes. These include residential, vacant or undeveloped land, commercial, industrial, recreation and entertainment, community services, public services and conservation uses based on the property type classification codes established by the New York State Board of Equalization and Assessment and displayed in the Assessor's database. The system of classification consists of numeric codes in nine general categories. Each category is further defined by divisions and subdivisions to delineate specific uses. This initial analysis relies only on the general category codes.³

Land Use Characteristics

The City of Watervliet contains 1.3 square miles of land area, which is equivalent to 832 acres. The City maintains assessment data on approximately 2,835 parcels that contain about 583 acres, indicating approximately 30% or 249 acres is dedicated to roads and right of ways.

Nearly 55% of the assessed land area is tax exempt for assessment purposes, indicating that only 280 acres or 1/3 of the total land area are generating real estate taxes.



Residential activities (200 series) utilize approximately 254 acres and account for about 44% of the assessed land area in the City of Watervliet. These uses also generate nearly 70% of the taxable assessed value of all land uses in the city. Multi-family residential apartments are listed as a commercial use (411) and comprise nearly 47 acres (8% of the total acreage) and account for over 12% of the taxable assessed value in the city. Combined, these residential uses total 301 acres (51.6% of total) and nearly 82% of the city's total taxable assessed value.

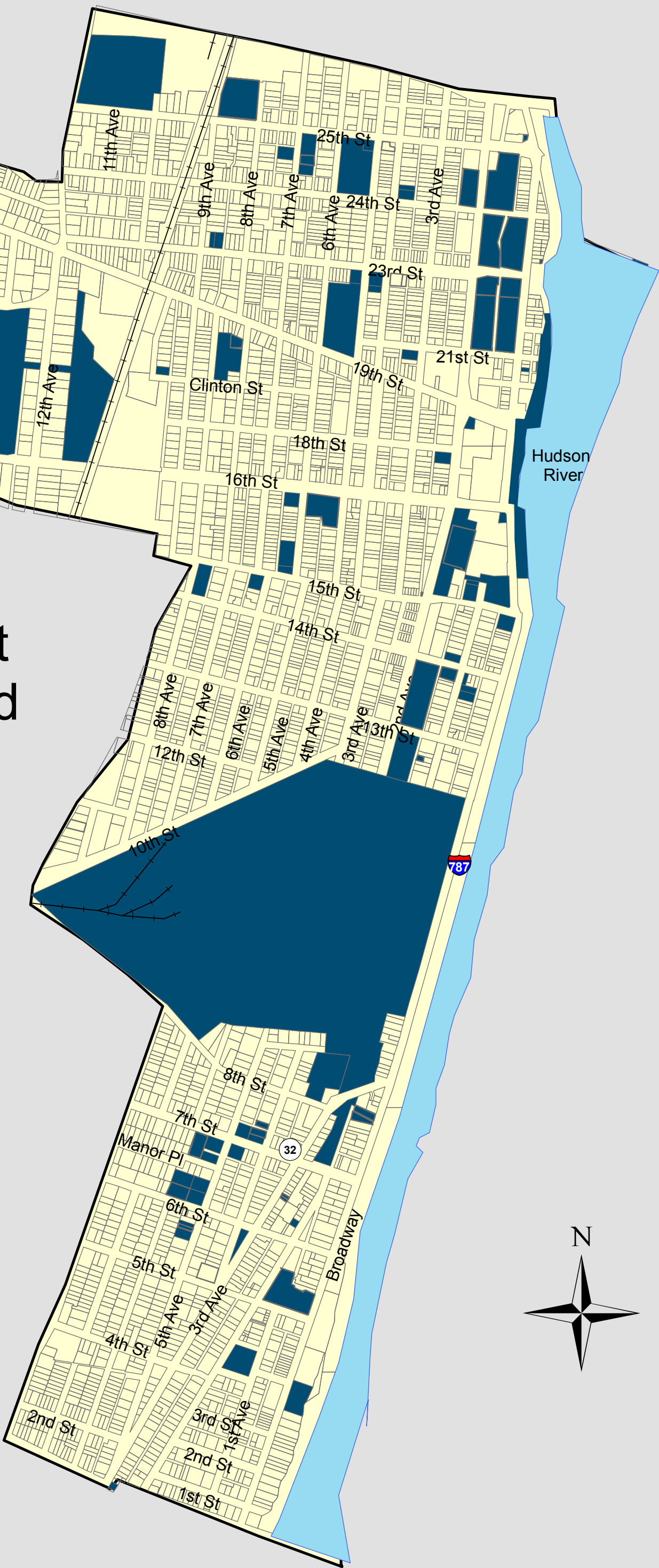
Vacant lands (300 series) comprise 19.5 acres, or only 3.3%, of the land area in the City and make up less than 1% of the taxable assessed value. The lack of available land for development is not surprising as the City is significantly built-out.

Commercial uses (400 series excluding multi-family apartments) utilize approximately 44 acres (7.5% of the land area) and account for 12.5% of the taxable assessed value in the City.

³**Residential** (200 series) - includes single family; two family; Three-family and mobile homes but not multi-family; mobile home parks or other residential/mixed use, which are classified in the commercial category. **Vacant land** (300) - includes property not in use or in temporary use or lacks permanent improvement; **Commercial** (400) - includes property used for sale of goods and services and residential uses noted above; **Recreation & Entertainment** (500) - includes property used by groups for recreation, amusement or entertainment; **Community services** (600) - Property used for the well being of the community; **Industrial** (700) - includes property used for the production of durable and non-durable goods; **Public services** (800) - Property used to provide services to the general public; **Conservation** (900) - Wild, Forested, Conservation lands and public parks.

Note: no Agricultural codes (100) were indicated in the database.

City of Watervliet Tax Exempt Land



 Tax Exempt Parcel



Table 25: Existing Land Use Summary					
Class	Use	Acres	% total acres	Taxable A.V.	% total A.V.
200	Residential	254.3	43.6%	\$172,789,665	69.6%
411	Apartments	46.7	8.0%	\$30,625,375	12.3%
300	Vacant land	19.5	3.3%	\$1,520,096	0.6%
400	Commercial	43.9	7.5%	\$31,097,045	12.5%
500	Recreation & entertainment	31.0	5.3%	\$0	0.0%
600	Community services	60.6	10.4%	\$1,240,500	0.5%
700	Industrial	22.4	3.8%	\$10,639,300	4.3%
800	Public services	105.0	18.0%	\$295,926	0.1%
Totals		583.3	100.0%	\$248,207,907	100.0%

Industrial uses (700 series) comprise only 3.8% of the land area in the City, approximately 22 total acres. The other principal land use categories represented in Watervliet include Public Services (105 acres - 18% of the total land area), Community Services (61 acres - 10%), and Recreation and Entertainment (31 acres and 5%).

Real Estate Tax Revenue Distribution

The City of Watervliet has a total taxable assessment base of \$248.2 million, as indicated in the Assessor's database. 69.6% of this taxable assessment is generated from residential properties and 24.8% from commercial properties. In other words, residential properties contribute \$0.70 on the dollar in tax revenues to support city services. Commercial properties contribute \$0.25 on the dollar. It should also be noted that about one-half of the commercial properties are multi-family residential uses so the contribution of residential properties to the city's tax base is even more significant. In comparison, industrial properties only account for 4.3% of the taxable assessment base (\$0.04 on the dollar). The remaining 1.2% of real estate tax revenue is generated from vacant land, community services and public services.

The chart above compares the distribution of taxable property by use to the distribution of land area in the City of Watervliet. A significant imbalance exists in terms of the percentage of land that is used for residential (43.6%) in comparison to the percentage of tax revenues generated (69.6%). A lesser imbalance exists for commercial use as shown, where commercial property constitutes 15.5% of Watervliet's assessed land area while it generates 24.8% of the City's property tax revenue. Industrial use utilizes 3.8% of the land and contributes 4.3% to the tax base.



This disparity is due in part to the high percentage of certain property categories that receive tax exemptions. As noted, approximately 45% of the City's overall assessment base is taxable, leaving 55% nontaxable. The greatest differential is in Public Services uses, where total property

assessment is in excess of \$219 million but generates only \$296,000 in taxable value. Public service uses, while comprising 18% of the City land area, generate less than 1% of its property tax revenues. Most of the property in this classification is the Watervliet Arsenal (102.5 acres or 97.8% of the land in this category).

One of the challenges facing the City is that it is essentially “built-out”. Vacant land contributes less than 1% of the City revenue from property taxes but also accounts for only 3.3% of the assessed land area of the City. Similar disparities incur with Community Services and Recreation uses but these uses tend to be primarily non-taxable. In Watervliet, Community Service uses make up 10.4% of the land area and contribute only 0.5% of the property tax revenues while Recreation uses comprise 5.3% of the City land area and contribute zero dollars in City tax revenues.

Expanding the Tax Base

Economic development is generally regarded as the primary ingredient to enhance or increase a municipal tax base, but other alternatives also exist. The following examples provide a better understanding of how real estate, economic development and tax base enhancement can interact to grow municipal revenues and help to position the City to take best advantage of its assets.



Hypothetically, how could Watervliet's municipal revenues increase by \$1.0 million a year, given its current tax base? Real estate taxes (approximately \$11.06 per \$1,000) account for 29.4% of annual revenues. The City's share of County retail sales taxes accounts for another 27.1% of annual revenues. Utility fees are the next biggest revenue generator, making up 22.1% of annual revenues to the City.

Each of the following scenarios would hypothetically generate \$1.0 million in additional municipal revenue.

Increase the tax rate by 29%: Based on current assessed values in the City, a property tax increase of \$3.19 per thousand would be required to generate an additional \$1.0 million in annual revenues.

Residential assessment, which represents 69.6% of Citywide assessment⁴, increases by 45%: If a strategy was specifically focused on enhancing the residential neighborhoods and over the long term values increased 45%, this would equate to \$91 million in increased assessment, generating \$1.0 million in increased revenue, assuming current tax rates.

Commercial/industrial assessment, which represents 16.8% of total assessment, increases by 318%: As indicated above, an increase in \$91 million in assessment is equivalent to an increase in current commercial/industrial assessment from \$41.7 million to \$132.7 million.

⁴ Based on Residential classified parcels. If multi-family parcels are included, the percentage is 81.2% - see Residential Tax Base section below.

New commercial/industrial development: An increase of \$91 million in taxable assessment, based on a range of construction costs, is equal to the following amount of new buildings, depending on the use.

- Increase from the existing 0.91 million to 1.21 million SF of office use, assuming a cost of between \$75 and \$100/SF.
- Increase from the existing 1.21 to 1.82 million SF for commercial use assuming a cost of between \$50 and \$75/SF.
- Increase from the existing 1.82 to 3.64 million SF for industrial use assuming a cost of between \$25 and \$50/SF.
- The new development would also create new jobs which would also benefit the City.

Realistically, some combination of the examples identified above may be attainable over the long term. However, Watervliet currently does not have the land area available to support between 0.91 million to 3.64 million SF of new development indicated in the third example, unless more land is made available through redevelopment, assemblage and demolition or annexation.

Roughly 42 to 167 acres would be needed to support 0.91 to 3.64 million SF of new development, assuming floor area ratios (FAR) of 50%.⁵ According to the City's assessment database, there is a total of only 19.5 acres of vacant land in the City; much of this acreage is in small, scattered lots or otherwise non-conducive for development. Despite these inherent limitations, a strategy to improve residential and commercial values while attracting new development, plus more retail sales tax revenue, would improve Watervliet's tax base.

The most significant opportunity for new development is expected to come from changes at the Watervliet Arsenal. As formerly federal government buildings or land become privatized for new uses, the properties will come on the City tax role. Over time this should provide a significant enhancement to Watervliet's tax base. As noted, 55% of the City's property value is tax exempt. The Watervliet Arsenal comprises a significant portion of this tax-exempt property base.

The Arsenal Business & Technology Partnership has entered into an enhanced lease agreement with the Watervliet Arsenal that will result in the private development of 65 acres of buildings and land on the Arsenal property. Property at the Arsenal complex has an average assessed value of over \$2.1 million per acre. The private development of 65 of these acres could add as much as \$139 million in taxable value to the City tax base. At the current property tax, this development would generate annual revenues of \$1.5 million. Since all Arsenal property is currently tax-exempt, the privatization of Arsenal properties will have the effect of significantly broadening the City's tax base, which could result in an overall reduction in property tax rates for Watervliet residents.

Residential Tax Base

Watervliet's housing stock is aged and diversified. There are 2,314 residential tax parcels that use 252 acres of land, making the average parcel about 0.11 acres or 4,700 sf. Of these residential parcels, 49.4% are single-family homes (1,143 parcels) comprising 134 acres (44.9% of residential

⁵ Floor area ratio (FAR) is a measurement of building density, based on the relation of total building area to total land area. A 30% FAR which is typically in a modern industrial/business park means 30% of the land is covered by a building, and 200% FAR means the building area is equal to two times the land area, which is more common in urban area. The higher the FAR the less land area for typical amenities such as parking, open space, truck loading, etc.

acreage); 45.1% of the residential parcels are two-family homes (1,043 parcels) comprising 104 acres (34.9%); and 5.5% are three-family properties (128 parcels) comprising 14 acres (4.5%).

Multi-family residential (4 or more units) is classified as commercial property in the assessment database. There are 116 parcels (5% of total residential parcels) so classified in Watervliet comprising 47 acres of land (15.6% of total residential acreage).

As previously noted, in comparing the distribution of taxable property by use to the distribution of land area in the City of Watervliet, there is a significant imbalance in terms of the percentage of land that is used for residential (43.6%) in comparison to the percentage of tax revenues generated (69.6%). If we include multi-family properties as a residential land use (rather than commercial as the assessment database classifies it), the numbers also increase measurably. Using this configuration, residential properties would comprise 51.2% of the land and generate 81.2% of the tax revenues.

Among the residential uses there is fairly equitable correlation between percentage of land use and percentage of tax revenues generated. All of the residential uses generate a higher percentage of tax revenues than any other land use. For example, single family homes account for 23% of total acreage in the City but contribute nearly 34% of the property tax revenues. Two-family homes comprise 18% of the total acreage in Watervliet and contribute 31% of the tax revenues. Performance of the other residential uses for purposes of tax yield are presented in the table below.

Table 26: Taxable Residential Property by Density					
Use	Acres	% total	Taxable A.V.	% total	Taxable A.V. per acre
Single family	134.18	23.0%	\$83,850,957	33.8%	\$624,914
Two family	104.22	17.9%	\$76,386,766	30.8%	\$732,938
Three family	13.53	2.3%	\$10,605,392	4.3%	\$783,843
Apartments	46.72	8.0%	\$30,625,375	12.3%	\$655,509
Total residential	298.65	51.2%	\$201,468,490	81.2%	\$674,597
Total All Uses	583.28	100.0%	\$248,207,907	100.0%	\$425,538

In terms of taxable value per acre, three family properties have the highest value at \$783,843 per acre, followed by two family homes at \$732,938 per acre and multi-family homes with an average per acre value of \$655,509. Single family properties have an average per acre taxable value of \$624,914. However, all of the residential uses have per acre taxable values considerably higher than the citywide average for all land uses, which is \$425,538 per acre.

Land Use and Land Management

Key Observations:

- In terms of acreage, residential uses comprise 51.6% of land use in Watervliet, at 301 acres. 18% of the land use in the City is public services.
- Nearly 55% of the assessed land area is exempt for assessment purposes, indicating that only about 280 acres are generating real estate taxes, approximately one-third of the total land area in the City.
- The City of Watervliet Zoning Ordinance provides eleven districts including four residential districts, three business districts, three waterfront districts and a manufacturing district.

City of Watervliet

The City of Watervliet is a small urban city that is completely built out. Approximately one-half of the Watervliet's land is residential in use scattered throughout the City, while commercial uses are primarily concentrated along 19th Street, Broadway, and Route 32 (Second Avenue). The Watervliet Arsenal in the middle of the City is located on a 143 acre site and includes 72 buildings with 2.1 million square feet of manufacturing space.

Hudson Shores Park and the Hudson River Bike Path are located along the Hudson River. Other recreational facilities, such as the Veterans Memorial Swimming Pool and Park and the Dome/Watervliet Veterans Memorial Recreational Facility are located on Second Avenue. Smaller neighborhood parks are located throughout the City.



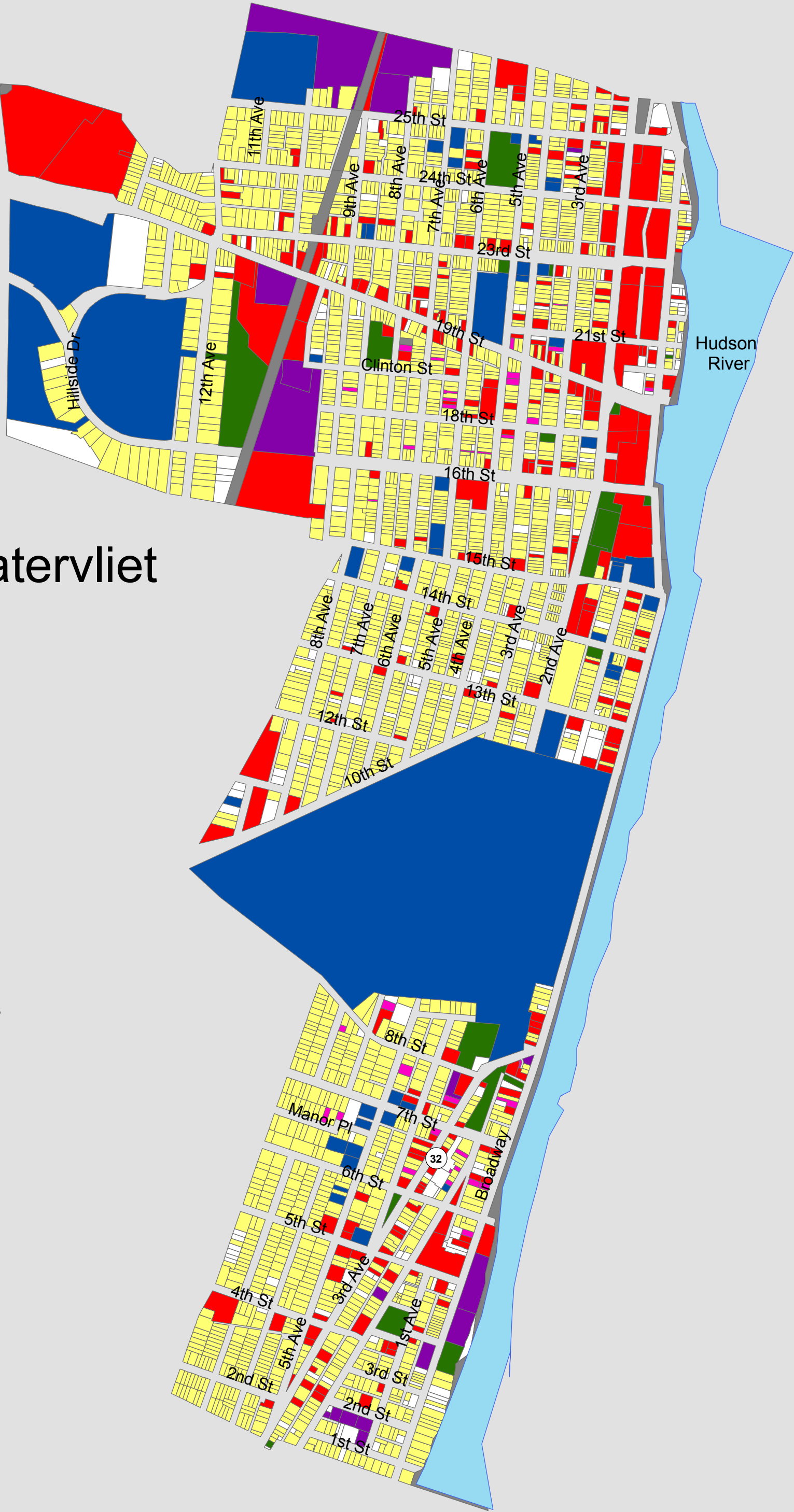
Land Use Characteristics

The following section presents a preliminary analysis of the general characteristics of Watervliet's tax base by major use categories as classified for assessment purposes. These include residential, vacant or undeveloped land, commercial, industrial, recreation and entertainment, community services, public services and conservation uses based on the property type classification codes established by the New York State Board of Equalization and Assessment and displayed in the assessor's database. The system of classification consists of numeric codes in nine general categories. Each category is further defined by divisions and subdivisions to delineate specific uses. For each purpose of this initial analysis, we have relied on only the general category codes.⁶

⁶**Residential** (200 series) - includes single family; two family; Three-family and mobile homes but not multi-family; mobile home parks or other residential/mixed use, which are classified in the commercial category. **Vacant land** (300) - includes property not in use or in temporary use or lacks permanent improvement; **Commercial** (400) - includes property used for sale of goods and services and residential uses noted above; **Recreation & Entertainment** (500) - includes property used by groups for recreation, amusement or entertainment; **Community services** (600) - Property used for the well being of the community; **Industrial** (700) - includes property used for the production of durable and non-durable goods; **Public services** (800) - Property used to provide services to the general public; **Conservation** (900) - Wild, Forested, Conservation lands and public parks. Note: no Agricultural codes (100) were indicated in the database.

City of Watervliet Land Use

- Residential
- Commercial
- Recreation
- Community Services
- Industrial
- Vacant Land
- Public Services
- Unknown
- Waterbodies



The City of Watervliet contains 1.3 square miles of land area, which is equivalent to 832 acres. The City maintains assessment data on approximately 2,835 parcels that contain approximately 583 acres, indicating approximately 249 acres is dedicated to roads and right of ways, or roughly 30% of the City.



Nearly 55% of the assessed land area is exempt for assessment purposes, indicating that only about 280 acres are generating real estate taxes. This is approximately one-third of the total land area in the City as represented by the US Census.

Residential uses (200 series) utilize approximately 254 acres and account for about 44% of the assessed land area in the City of Watervliet. These uses also generate nearly 70% of the taxable assessed value of all land uses in the city. Multi-family residential apartments are listed as a commercial use (411) and comprise nearly 47 acres (8% of the total acreage) and account for over 12% of the taxable assessed value in the city. Combined, these residential uses total 301 acres (51.6% of total) and nearly 82% of the city's total taxable assessed value.

Vacant lands (300 series) comprise 19.5 acres or only 3.3% of the land area in the City and make up less than 1% of the taxable assessed value. The lack of available land for development is not surprising as the City is significantly built-out.

Commercial uses (400 series excluding multi-family apartments) utilize approximately 44 acres (7.5% of the land area) and account for 12.5% of the taxable assessed value in the City.

Industrial uses (700 series) comprise only 3.8% of the land area in the City, approximately 22 total acres. The other principal land use categories represented in Watervliet include Public Services (105 acres - 18% of the total land area), Community Services (61 acres - 10%), and Recreation & Entertainment (31 acres and 5%).

Table 27: Existing Land Use Summary

Class	Use	Acres	% total acres	Taxable A.V.	% total A.V.
200	Residential	254.3	43.6%	\$172,789,665	69.6%
411	Apartments	46.7	8.0%	\$30,625,375	12.3%
300	Vacant land	19.5	3.3%	\$1,520,096	0.6%
400	Commercial	43.9	7.5%	\$31,097,045	12.5%
500	Recreation & entertainment	31.0	5.3%	\$0	0.0%
600	Community services	60.6	10.4%	\$1,240,500	0.5%
700	Industrial	22.4	3.8%	\$10,639,300	4.3%
800	Public services	105.0	18.0%	\$295,926	0.1%
Total		583.3	100.0%	\$248,207,907	100.0%

Analysis of Land Use Regulations

This element of the Community Profile includes a review the current land use regulations that apply to the City of Watervliet including an examination of zoning districts and development standards.

The purpose of the City of Watervliet's Zoning is set forth in Article 1 of the City General Code as follows:

The zoning regulations and districts have been made in accordance with a comprehensive plan for the purpose of promoting the health, safety, morals or the general welfare of the community. They have been designed to lessen congestion in the streets, to secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers, to provide adequate light and air, to prevent the overcrowding of land, to avoid undue concentration of population, to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewage, schools, parks and other public requirements. They have been made with reasonable consideration, among other things, as to the character of each district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses and with a view of conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the city.

Article IV, Use Districts, discusses eleven districts including four residential districts, three business districts, three waterfront districts and a manufacturing district. While no purpose is provided for each district, the characteristics of the districts provide insight into their individual intent. The following is a description of each district and its utilization within the City.

The *R-1 Residential District* is a traditional single family district. The residential neighborhood surrounding the High School is the only area of the City zoned R-1. Uses permitted by right in the R-1 include single-family dwellings, churches, public libraries or museums, schools, hospitals, and structures for public utilities. Uses permitted with a special use permit include cemeteries and the buildings and structures associated with the cemetery. The minimum lot size for this district is 4,500 square feet with a maximum building height of 2½ stories. In the single family neighborhood zoned R-1 the majority of the lots are considerably larger than the district minimum, ranging from 10,000 square feet to 21,780 square feet (or a half acre).

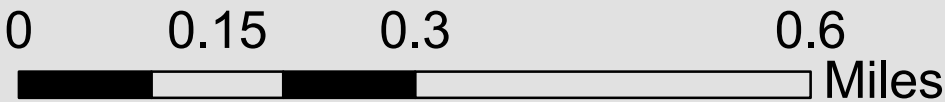
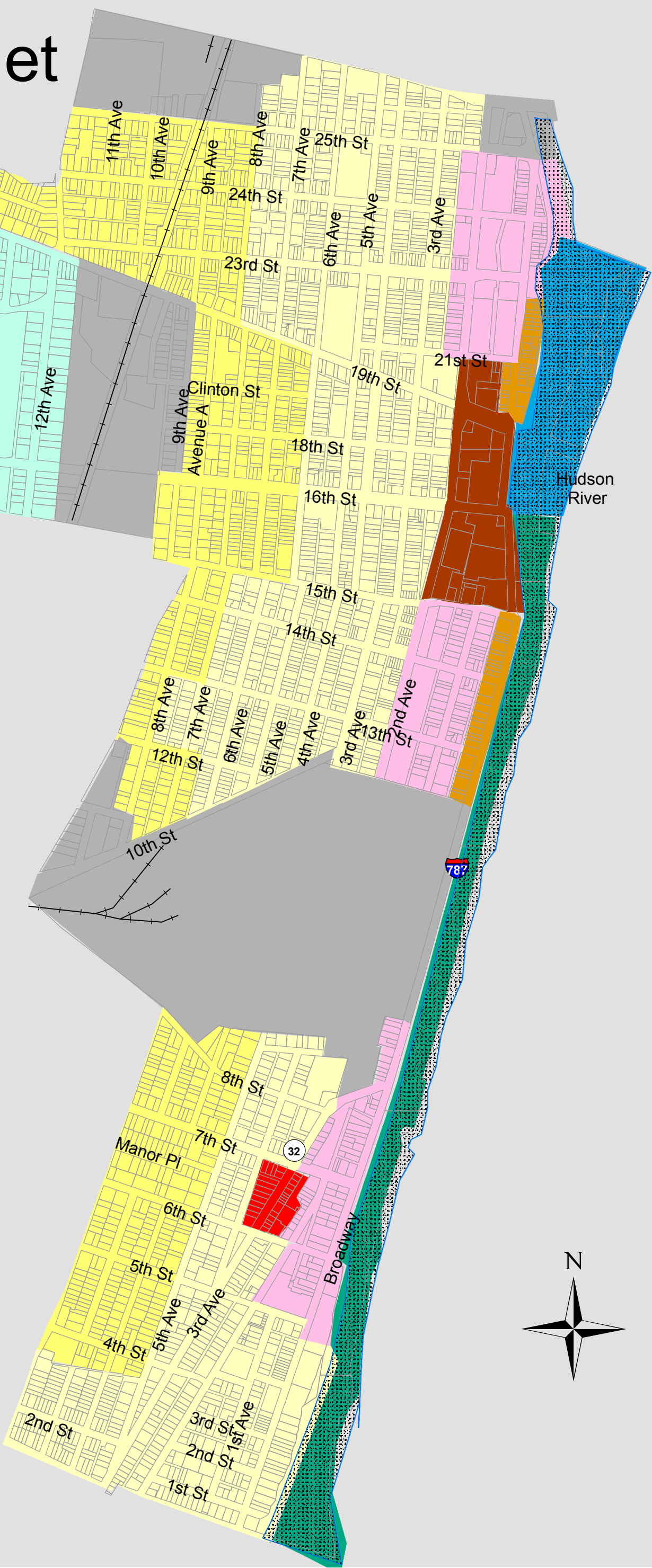
The *R-2 and R-3 Residential Districts* have the same permitted uses, lot and bulk standards. Without the provision of a purpose for each district, there is no discernable difference between the two. The R-2 and R-3 districts represent most of the City. These districts encompass the midsection of the City west of 3rd Avenue and east to 7th Avenue, along most of the 19th Street corridor and elsewhere. Uses permitted by right include all the uses permitted in the R-1 district, and two-family dwellings, fire stations and other public buildings and essential services necessary to the protection of or servicing of a neighborhood. The minimum lot size for this district is 4,000 square feet with a maximum building height of 2½ stories. There are neighborhoods within the City, particularly along 7th Avenue west to the City line, that appear to be predominantly single-family residences zoned R-2. The 19th Street corridor is zoned R-3 but the established uses include a wide variety of commercial uses, all of which are nonconforming uses under the existing zoning.



City of Watervliet Zoning

Zoning Districts

-  R-1 Residential
-  R-2 Residential
-  R-3 Residential
-  R-4 Residential
-  B-1 Local Business
-  B-2 Central Business
-  M-1 Manufacturing
-  Waterfront Recreation
-  Waterfront Open Space
-  Waterfront Mixed Use
-  Tax Parcels
-  Hudson River
-  Railroads



The *R-4 Residential District* provides for multi-family housing. Areas of the City zoned R-4 include several locations adjacent to I-787 and include the City's public housing and senior housing complexes. Uses permitted by right in the R-4 Residential District include all uses permitted in the R-3 district and multifamily dwellings, high-density dwellings, residential hotels, boardinghouses, lodging houses, rooming houses and tourist houses, and clubs, lodges, and social and recreational center buildings, as well as professional offices. Uses permitted with a special use permit include funeral parlors. The minimum lot size for all uses permitted in this district, other than a high-density multifamily dwelling, is 4,000 square feet. For a high-density multi-family dwelling, the minimum lot size for this district is 20,000 square feet. The allowable building height in this district is up to 9 stories, considerably higher than any other district.

The *B-1 Business District* is a mixed-use district located on part of 3rd and 4th Avenues between 6th and 7th Streets. Uses permitted by right include all uses permitted in the R-3 district and stores, shops or markets where goods are sold or personal services are rendered, business and professional offices and banks, restaurants (not including diners or roadside stands), and gasoline sales stations. The minimum lot size for this district is 2,000 square feet for those commercial uses and 4,000 square feet for all other uses permitted in the R-3 district. Buildings have a maximum building height of 2½ stories.

The *B-2 Business District* is the central commercial district generally located between I-787 and 2nd Avenue between 15th and 21st streets. Uses permitted by right in the B-2 district include any use permitted in the B-1 district, (except single-family and two-family dwellings), hotels, theaters, dance halls, billiard rooms, bowling alleys, skating rinks or other places of amusement or assembly, schools conducted for gain, newspaper publishers, funeral homes and mortuaries, new and used motor vehicle sales and service establishments, laundry and dry-cleaning establishments, municipal and other governmental buildings and uses.



The minimum lot size for any use permitted in the B-2 district and not permitted in any residential district is 2,000 square feet. For any other use permitted in the B-2 district, the minimum lot size is 4,000 square feet. The maximum permitted building height is 5 stories or 70 feet.

The *B-3 Business District* is a mixed use district allowing high density residential uses and traditional commercial uses. *This district is not presently mapped on the Official Zoning Map.* Uses permitted by right include any use permitted in the R-4 and B-2 districts. For any use permitted in the B-3 district, the regulations of the R-4 and B-2 districts (lot area and width, etc.) apply.

The *M-1 Manufacturing District* is a traditional industrial district allowing manufacturing and other more intense land uses as long as they meet performance standards. Areas of the City zoned M-1 include portions of the northern end of the City, the Arsenal, and west of 19th Street along the rail line to 12th Avenue. Uses permitted by right in this district include any use permitted in the B-2 district, except that no building or land shall be used in whole or in part for dwelling purposes. Any other lawful use which in the opinion of the Board of Zoning Appeals would not cause injurious or

obnoxious noise, vibrations, smoke, gas, fumes, odors, dust or other objectionable conditions, is allowed with a special permit. The minimum lot size for this district is 8,000 square feet.

The *WRD Waterfront Recreation District* applies to the City owned lands located along the Hudson River shoreline that comprise the Hudson Shores Park. Permitted uses include water-related recreational uses, including non-motorized boat launches, floating docks and seasonally moored vessels and other outdoor recreational uses, including flea markets and farmers markets, outdoor amphitheaters, special events venues, and bike/hike trails. Uses permitted by special permit include seasonally operated restaurant establishments on barges, provided that such uses connect to the City's public sewer infrastructure and subject to site plan review.

The *WOSD Waterfront Open Space District* applies to the portion of the City of Watervliet's shoreline not including Hudson Shores Park. This segment of the shoreline is characterized primarily by steeply sloping shore lands. Permitted uses include bird watching, recreational fishing or the development of a bike/hike trail.

The *WBD Waterfront Business District* is a mixed-use waterfront district applied to the following areas: Broadway from the North Arsenal Wall to 15th Street; Broadway from 19th Street to 21st Street; and the east side of Broadway from 21st Street to 22nd Street. Permitted uses include single-family dwellings, stores, shops or markets where goods are sold or personal services are rendered, businesses and professional offices, banks, restaurants, including those with outdoor café seating (but not including a diner or roadside stand) a dining establishment where food is dispensed in the public right-of-way, hotels, bed and breakfasts, theaters, bowling alleys, skating rinks or other places of amusement, and municipal and other governmental buildings and uses.

In conjunction with the creation of waterfront zoning districts, the City of Watervliet adopted a Waterfront Consistency Review Law (Local Law #2 of 2005) as part of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) adopted in 2005. This Law requires a coordinated review by the City of all proposed actions within the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program boundary for consistency with the policies of the City's LWRP.

The Zoning chapter (Article VII) in the City of Watervliet Code includes comprehensive standards for stormwater control that are intended to be utilized in conjunction with the Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control standards of Chapter 242 of the City Code. The standards in Article VII require Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans that reflect the best practices standards recommended in the NYS Stormwater Management Design Manual.

Supplemental regulations are set forth in Article III, Area and Bulk Regulations, and address accessory uses; accessory buildings; wireless telecommunications facilities; front, side and rear yards; off-street parking and loading requirements; and nonconforming uses among others. Sign regulations are located in Chapter 235, Signs, of the City Code. With the exception of the regulations for wireless telecommunication facilities, which were added in 2007, most of the supplemental regulations provide minimum guidance and could be updated to reflect more modern standards and zoning techniques. Furthermore, there are few standards addressing the protection of neighborhood character with regard to infill development and alterations, building and site design, pedestrian access, landscaping, screening and lighting.

Article V, Administration, addresses enforcement, certificates of occupancy, and responsibilities of the Zoning Board of Appeals which includes special use permits. The City's Code does not include

the process of Site Plan Review. Site Plan Review is an important, generally accepted mechanism for reviewing new development and expansion projects. Site Plan Review allows a community to review all aspects of a project from impacts on the environment, the neighborhood and infrastructure, to the installation of infrastructure, to the physical site development. Site Plan is reviewed by the Planning Board and is typically required for all nonresidential and multi-family development. Site Plan Review is coordinated with other permitting processes such as subdivision, special permits and variances.

While the Comprehensive Planning process has been underway, the City of Watervliet City Council, the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals have operated under a Memorandum of Understanding for the processing of the visual and land use impacts of proposed development and redevelopment in the City.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Key Observations:

- The Highway Department is responsible for basic road maintenance and signage of the approximately 35 miles of roadway in the City.
- The Department of Refuse and Recycling is responsible for sanitation pickup.
- Large resurfacing projects, such as the current 19th Street project, are funded through the state and Federal funds. Such projects are contracted out to private experts.
- The City is served by municipal water and sewer systems which are both aged and in need of periodic upkeep and repairs.
- The City of Watervliet has been awarded \$50,000 for a feasibility study examining legal obstacles and challenges in creating a joint water district with the Town of Guilderland, where Watervliet owns a 480 acre water reservoir.

Transportation

Street and Highways

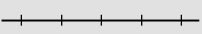
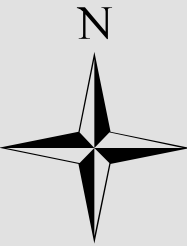
Watervliet is centrally located amidst several of the Capital Region's major transportation routes. According to the Highway Mileage Report for New York State, the City of Watervliet has 46.5 miles of roadway (total centerline highway mileage⁷) including 2.6 miles owned by the New York State Department of Transportation and



6.7 other miles (presumably owned by the Federal Government at the Arsenal). City residents have a direct connection to points north, south, east, and west by means of I-787, which connects with Route 7 north of the City and the NYS Thruway (I-87) south of the City. NYS Route 2, known as 19th Street within the City limits, provides a direct and vital connection to another major north-south route, I-87 (Northway) to the west as well as a connection to Troy to the east. NYS Route 32 is a north-south arterial and is Second Avenue north of the Arsenal and Third Avenue south of the Arsenal. The City's internal transportation network, as well as its Central Business District hub, is centered on the intersection of NYS Route 2 and NYS Route 32. The City's highway department is responsible for basic road maintenance and signage throughout the City.

⁷ Mileage is measured along the centerline of the highway (in one direction) regardless of the number of lanes or whether the highway is divided or undivided.

City of Watervliet Roadways



Railroads



Table 28: Local Highway Traffic Volume Report

Road	Start Description	End Description	Section Length	AADT (year)
8 th Avenue	Fourth Street	N. Arsenal Wall	0.48	1,000 (2006)
19 th Street	Boght Road & 12 th Avenue	Grotto Court	0.09	14,300 (2001)
19 th Street	2 nd Avenue	Boght Road & 12 th Avenue	0.64	17,400 (2004)
2 nd Avenue	21 st Street	23 rd Street	0.2	14,500 (2004)
2 nd Avenue	13 th Street	21 st Street	0.47	4,900 (2004)
2 nd Avenue	23 rd Street	N City Line	0.22	6,400 (2005)
10 th Street	West City Line		0.36	3,100 (2005)
3 rd Avenue	3 rd Avenue	Broadway	1.22	10,200 (2002)
13 th Street	2 nd Avenue	Broadway	0.14	3,100 (2006)
25 th Street	W City Line	2 nd Avenue	0.59	5,000 (2006)
23 rd Street	Green Island Line	Broadway	0.15	1,300 (2004)

Source: Local Highway Traffic Volume Report

The remaining roads within the City are classified as local roads. The primary function of local roads is to provide access to various land uses. Local roads serve short trips, moderate speeds and do not carry large volumes of traffic. Many local roads have been converted to one-way streets to increase the number of parking spaces. Although one-way streets generate burdensome circulatory movements, they do maximize parking space in a confined developed area. The majority of the side roads appear to be in good condition when compared to the heavier traveled roadways.

Table 29: Major Roads in the City of Watervliet

Street/Highway	Start Description	End Description	AADT (year)
Route 2	Watervliet City line	Intersection of Boght Road and 12 th Avenue	14,270 (2008)
Route 2	Intersection of Boght Road and 12 th Avenue	Route 32 Junction	19,340 (2007)
Route 32	Route 155	Route 2	4,930 (2004)
Route 32	Route 2	23 rd Avenue	12,870 (2008)

Source: 2008 Traffic Data Report for New York State

Truck Routes and Traffic

Truck traffic, or heavy vehicles as they are sometimes called, differ from passenger cars and light trucks by their size, weight, and operational characteristics. Due to the excessive weight of truck traffic and the difficulty encountered when maneuvering, the amount of truck traffic can significantly affect the longevity of pavement, curbing, driveway entrances and other features of the roadway system if not properly designed. Truck traffic also imposes environmental impacts, such as noise and air pollution, not to mention inconvenience, and esthetic displeasure.

According to the NYSDOT, Official Description of Designated Qualifying and Access Highways in New York State, the following segments on NYS Routes 2 and 32 are designated as qualifying highways for larger dimension vehicles:

- NYS Route 2 – (Troy Schenectady Road and 19th Street) – I-87 (Exit 6) to NY 32 (2nd Avenue) in the City of Watervliet and the Town of Colonie (Albany County)

- NYS Route 32 – (Saratoga Street, Cohoes Road and 2nd Avenue) – Dyke Avenue (Cohoes) to NY 2 (19th Street) in the Cities of Cohoes and Watervliet, and the Town of Colonie (Albany County)
- NYS Route 32 – Northern I-787 exit ramp on South Pearl Street to the NY 23/NY 32 overlap in the City of Albany and the Towns of Bethlehem, New Scotland, Coeymans, Westerlo, Greenville and Cairo (Albany and Greene Counties)

Due to the unique location of the downtown area within the City of Watervliet, local roadways experience excessive, unwanted volumes of truck traffic. As described above, NYS Route 2 (2nd Avenue) is qualified as a designated truck route from the intersection of NYS Routes 2 & 32 to points north. NYS Route 32 is considered a designated truck route from the intersection of NYS Routes 2 and 32 to points east. Based upon these qualifying routes established by NYSDOT, officially larger dimension vehicles are not allowed to access 19th Street nor are they allowed to use NY Route 32 (2nd Avenue) from the intersection with NY Route 2 to the northern I-787 exit ramp on South Pearl Street in the City of Albany. However, due to the terminus for two major NY Routes being at the intersection of NY Routes 2 & 32, truck traffic utilizes the downtown roadways of Watervliet to access the two previously mentioned qualifying routes.

Bus Transit

The Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) offers handicapped accessible public transportation services for the Capital Region. Service for Watervliet residents is provided along CDTA Service Routes #22 and 35x, 84, and 90. CDTA Route 22 (for Sundays and major holidays and Route 35x during weekdays) serves the Cities of Albany, Troy, and Watervliet. Route 84 is properly named the Watervliet Belt because it serves numerous bus stops along 19th Street, 12th Avenue, Crabapple Lane, 25th Street, and Broadway in the City of Watervliet. Commuters from Watervliet can also use the CDTA Route 90 bus route to reach destinations such as Crossgates Mall, Colonie Center, Samaritan Hospital, RPI College, SUNY Albany and Latham Farms Shopping Center. There are many bus stops within the City. However, very few bus stops include bus shelters to protect people from inclement weather. Several major bus stops, including the stop on Broadway across from the Senior Center and Library, lack a pedestrian crosswalk or pedestrian signals. The City recently received a grant to purchase and operate a scheduled bus service within the City and the Village/Town of Green Island.



Passenger Rail

As there is no passenger rail station in the City of Watervliet, rail passengers must travel across the river to the Amtrak Terminal located in Rensselaer.

Infrastructure

Sewers

The City of Watervliet is completely sewered. Watervliet's sewage disposal system is connected to the Albany County Sewer District. The City routinely contributes less to the facility than allocated and is not overburdening the sewer facility. However, the age of the sewer system -- much of it was installed around 1930-- has contributed to a number of problems. Early system designs do not meet modern standards. The system combining sanitary sewage and storm runoff causes an increased burden on the sewage treatment plant during rainstorms. Historically, the Port Schuyler neighborhood has experienced the worst overflow problems. In 2003 the City removed one combined sewer overflow (CSO) from its inventory. Currently, the City experiences discharges from the City's (CSO) only in wet weather conditions. Continued capital improvements to separate combined storm and sanitary sewers is desirable, as it would eliminate a source of pollution.

Water Supply

The City of Watervliet is serviced by a municipal water supply. The City uses the 480-acre Watervliet Reservoir in the Town of Guilderland for its public water supply. Since the City has municipal water, the quality of potable water is relatively consistent. However, the City occasionally must address problems due to the advanced age of the system. Almost 40% of Watervliet's water system was built in 1915. Another 55% was built between 1935 and 1945. The system accommodates approximately 2,800 service connections. In 2007 the total water delivered to the City was approximately 1 billion gallons, with the daily average being 2.3 million gallons. The safe yield is 12mgd and the City uses around 8 mgd per day. The City is investigating increasing capacity to 20 to 25 mgd.

A study completed for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1981 (the Watervliet, New York Water Distribution System Network Analysis) identified a number of problems with the City's water distribution system. In addition to a susceptibility to leaking, many of the water mains are insufficiently sized for fire protection and for compliance with current engineering practices. Since that 1981 report was completed, there have been major improvements to the water distribution system.

- Many undersized water mains have been replaced through public works projects and a new main was installed.
- By adding an inhibitor system and a consistent flushing program there has been a measurable reduction in the rate of turburculation of the City's system. An aggressive flushing program is just as important.
- A second major feed to the northern end of the City was installed in 1986.
- A new interconnect with the City of Troy, capable of providing 1.2 million gallons per day, was installed at Schuyler Flatts in 1986.

Utilities and Telecommunications

National Grid serves the City of Watervliet, providing gas and electric service. Verizon provides local telephone service, internet service, and high speed DSL internet access. Time Warner Cable provides cable television, digital television, high speed internet access and cable phone services.

Natural Environment

Key Observations:

- The City of Watervliet is located in a temperate climate characterized by four distinct seasons.
- With the exception of the Hudson River Shoreline and the western boundary of the City, Watervliet is relatively flat.
- Watervliet has approximately 6 acres of freshwater wetlands located in the southern part of the City.
- The Hudson River forms the eastern boundary of the City, although residents have limited direct access to it because of I-787.
- Areas of the City that lie within the 100-year flood plain are found along the Hudson River, along most of Broadway, First Street, and portions of 13th, 14th, 15th Streets and First, Second and Third Avenue north of the Watervliet Arsenal.
- A Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) was completed in 2005 for the City of Watervliet.
- According to the NYSDEC's Environmental Remediation Database, there were two sites within the City that were addressed under the Division of Environmental Remediation's (DER) remedial programs. Both sites remediation programs have been completed and the cases are closed.

Climate

The City of Watervliet is located in a temperate climate characterized by four distinct seasons. Local temperatures generally range from an average daily of 24 degrees Fahrenheit (F) in winter to 69 degrees F in the summer. Average daily minimum temperature is 15 degrees F in the winter with an average high maximum temperature of 81 degrees F in the summer. Annual precipitation is approximately 36 inches, while the average seasonal snowfall is 67 inches. The sun shines an average of 60% of the time in the summer and 40% in the winter.

Topography

According to the City's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, Watervliet's Hudson River shoreline is characterized primarily by steep slopes. The segment of shoreline owned by the Watervliet Arsenal, encompassing the shore directly across from the Arsenal, is the most narrow, steep portion of the shoreline. This segment is fortified by a retaining wall. The City-owned Hudson Shores Park is located to the north of the Arsenal and, the State-owned Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike trail is located to the south. Both of these parcels have wider flat lands with some steep areas closer to the riverfront. A good portion of Hudson Shores Park is sloped, rendering a sizable portion of the park undevelopable for recreational purposes. Once removed from the Hudson River shoreline, the City of Watervliet has relatively flat terrain with the exception of steeper slopes located on the western boundary of Watervliet on either side of 19th Street.

Soils

Soils within the City of Watervliet fall within one general category - Urban Land-Udipsamments-Udorthents. As described in the *Soil Survey of Albany County*, the general soils map unit – Urban Land – Udipsamments-Udorthents is urbanized area and dominantly nearly level to steep, somewhat excessively drained and moderately well drained, coarse textured to fine textured, very

deep soils; on deltas and plains. The soils in this map unit formed in sand, silt, and clay deposits on glacial lake plains and deltas. The landscape has been altered during construction of housing, commercial buildings, parking lots, streets and roads but also has open spaces, such as parks, vacant lots and lawns. Most areas of this soil category are used for residential or commercial development. These areas have been graded or smoothed; therefore onsite investigation is needed to determine the suitability of the soils for most uses.

Surface Water Resources

Wetlands

Once believed to be flooded wastelands, wetlands are now recognized as valuable natural resources. Wetlands provide important wildlife habitats, opportunities for recreation and valuable open space. Regardless of their size, wetlands contain a diverse range of plant and animal species. Wetlands also play an important role in flood control and in improving water quality, as they are natural sponges able to absorb large quantities of run-off and filter out impurities and sediments. Poorly drained soils, a dense drainage network, areas of flat topography and adequate precipitation work in unison to produce ideal conditions for wetlands. Unfortunately, current mapping of these wetlands is poor, requiring site-by-site evaluation of development projects.

In New York State, the Freshwater Wetlands Act (1975) protects wetlands from activities that can have a negative impact on water quality. The Act regulates wetlands of 12.4 acres in size and smaller wetlands determined to be of unusual local importance. State regulation of these wetlands also extends to a buffer of 100 feet surrounding the wetland. Anyone proposing to undertake an activity on or within 100 feet of a designated wetland is required to obtain a permit from NYS DEC. While these wetlands have been mapped in the past, the state regulated wetland maps are over 25 years old and are no longer representative of the actual extent of these wetlands.



In addition to the state regulations, wetlands are also protected under the Federal Clean Water Act, which is overseen by the US Army Corps of Engineers (US ACE) under the Section 401 permit program. Federal classified wetlands have no minimum size, and can be regulated as small as 1/10th of an acre. Federal wetlands are determined based on three criteria that include vegetation, period of inundation and hydric soils. Unfortunately, recent Supreme Court rulings have limited the US ACE's ability to protect "isolated wetlands", so it continues to be important for state and local municipalities to protect these resources.

According to the City's LWRP, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation has identified and regulates a freshwater wetland at the City's southern end, bordering the Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail head and partially under I-787. The wetland is 14.6 acres; only about 6 acres is located in Watervliet. The remainder is located in the Town of Colonie. Part of the Schuyler Flatts wetlands, this wetland is known as Little River. Due to its location within an urbanized area, the wetland is designated Class II. Permits for activity in a Class II wetland are issued only if a significant social and economic need is demonstrated which clearly outweighs the loss of the

benefits provided by the wetland. Watervliet will protect wetlands within the City boundary and educate citizens about these critical resources.

Waterbodies

In New York State, the Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) maintains a stream classification system (A through D) that categorizes streams based on their highest and best use.

- Class A streams can be used as drinking water. Subclasses of AA or AAA can be used for grading drinking water supplies.
- Class B streams are best for primary and secondary contact recreation and fishing. These waters are suitable for fish propagation and survival.
- Class C waters are most suitable for fishing and fish propagations and have water quality characteristics that make them suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation. Streams classified as C can carry subclasses of (T) or (TS) which represent their ability to support trout populations. Class C(T) or trout spawning C (TS). Under Article 15 of the NYS Environmental Conservation Law, streams with a classification of C(T) or higher require a permit for activities within the stream.
- Class D streams may be suitable for fishing, fish survival, and primary and secondary recreation, but are often limited by flow or stream substrate. Class C and D streams are not subject to NYSDEC stream protection regulations and do not require permits.

There are two streams located in the City of Watervliet. A Class D stream is located at the southern end of the City and flows into the Hudson River. A Class C stream is located at the northern end of the City and also flows into the Hudson River.

Hudson River

The Hudson River flows along the City's eastern boundary. The Hudson River flows 315 miles from the Adirondack Mountains to New York City. South of the Federal Dam in Troy the River is considered a tidal estuary, subject to tides and the upriver press of salty ocean water. The tides cause the river to flow two ways: its current alternates between an ebb running south toward the sea and a flood running north toward Troy. The Hudson River was designated as an American Heritage River in 1997.

According to the LWRP, the Hudson River has long suffered from chemical and biological pollutants. The stretch of the Hudson River adjacent to the shoreline of Watervliet is classified as Class C. As Class C, the water is regarded as good for fish breeding and fishing. There are moderate impairments due to the presence of priority organics and Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) contamination. While the river is currently regarded as unsuitable for swimming or drinking, there were Statewide goals to improve water quality, allowing the river to be swimmable by 2009. However, according to a report published by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation on the 2009 Hudson River Summit, the River near Albany frequently fails water quality standards for swimming due to high levels of bacteria.



Flood Plains

The National Flood Insurance Program Flood Insurance Rate Maps, provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, for the City of Watervliet indicate that several areas within the City lie within the 100-year flood plain. The flood event having a 1 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year is known as the base flood (or 100 -year flood). Zone A12 is defined as an area that will be inundated by the 1 percent annual chance flood where base flood elevations and flood hazard factors have been determined and Zone C is defined as areas outside the 500 year flood.

Within Watervliet, lands subject to flooding are within the Zone A12. These areas are found along the Hudson River, along most of Broadway, First Street, and portions of 13th, 14th, 15th Streets and First, Second and Third Avenue north of the Watervliet Arsenal. There are also portions of the City that lie in Zone B, defined as areas between the limits of the 100 year flood and the 500 year flood. These areas are found along I-787 as well as areas adjacent to Zone A12 which includes First, Second, and Third Avenues and portions of Fifth Avenue south of the Arsenal. North of the Arsenal, Zone B includes Second Avenue and portions of Third, Fourth and Fifth Avenue.

Storm Water Management

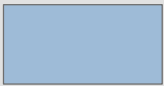
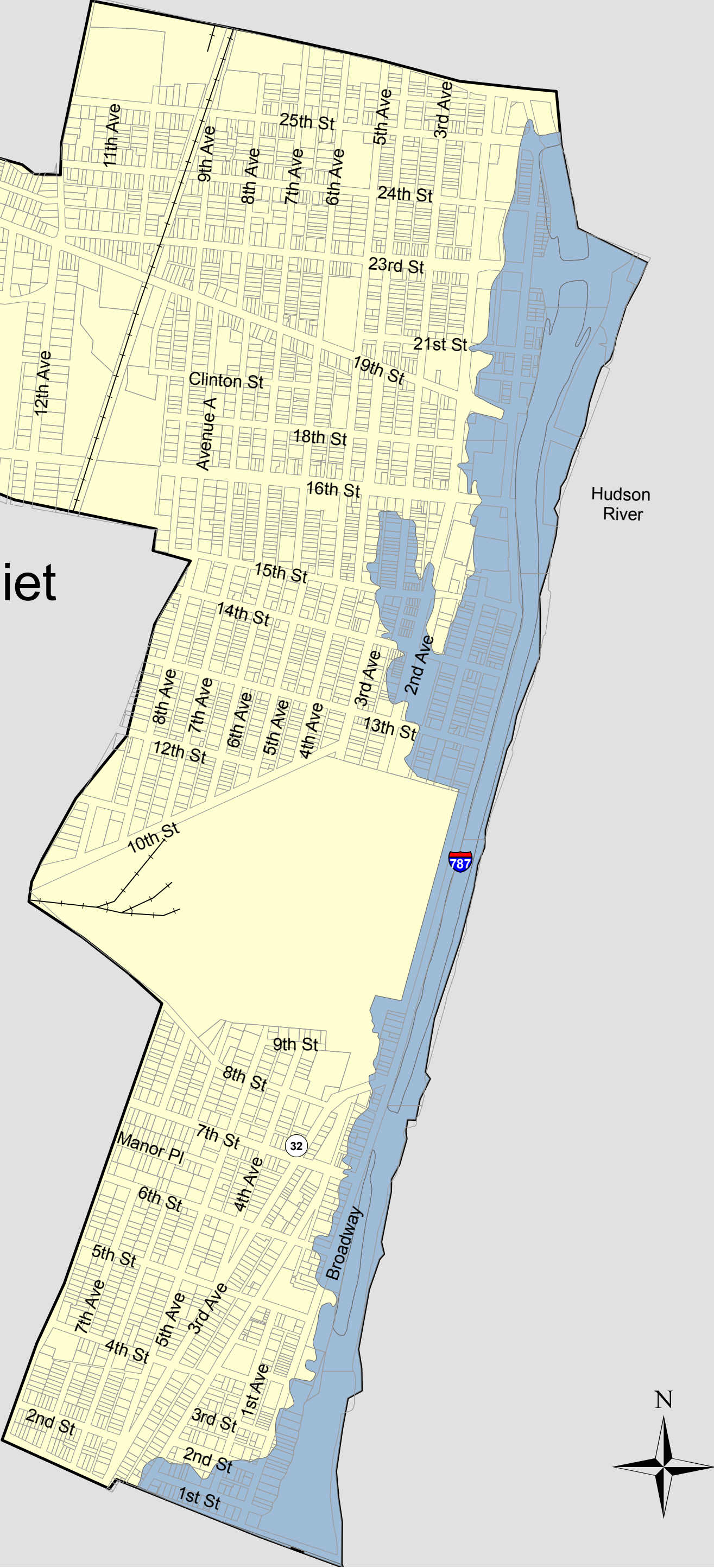
According to the City's LWRP, Watervliet is designated an MS4 (municipal separate storm sewer system) community. It currently has no parcels, aside from parklands, exceeding one acre in size. In addition to the City itself, there are three other major independent contributors to stormwater runoff. These are the Town of Colonie, the Watervliet Arsenal, and I-787. The Town of Colonie, which encircles the City on its three landward sides, contributes more than 80% of the total volume of stormwater that passes through the City's systems. The exact extent and impact of discharges from the Watervliet Arsenal, which comprises about 25% of the City's land area, is not known. I-787 generally sheds runoff to both the east and west along the City's Hudson River shoreline.

The City has been actively addressing water quality issues on two important fronts. The City has been actively participating on an Albany County Water Quality Subcommittee that deals solely with stormwater issues. One primary objective of the subcommittee is to assist municipalities in developing and implementing newly identified federal requirements from the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Committee also works to efficiently channel the resources of the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), Albany County Soil and Water Conservation, and Albany County Planning. Albany County Planning, on behalf of the committee, applied for and received a \$100,000 grant to assist in this endeavor. Using monies available from several sources (including grant funds allocated for stormwater management, 604B Program funds disbursed through CDRPC, and Albany County Soil and Water resources), the Committee has focused on developing a variety of activities, so that the overall effectiveness of the funds are maximized.

Activities funded through the program include public education and outreach; training building officials; educating zoning and planning board members; and training contractors. Other objectives include the evaluation of stormwater management plans as they impact adjacent communities and developing inter-municipal agreements, GIS mapping, assessment of local land use, and providing educational resources for all communities.

City of Watervliet Floodplain



Floodplain



Railroads



Source: City of Watervliet Office of Real Property Services

Watervliet's stormwater management program includes public outreach and education to inform residents of the impacts associated with illegal discharges, improper disposal of household chemicals and the importance of unpaved open spaces for absorbing and controlling water. The City will also draft an ordinance in the future to address all aspects for the proper channeling of stormwater. This will include developing an appropriate design as well as establishing maintenance guidelines for newly-constructed properties on 1+ acre sites. This will insure that best management practices are being implemented.

The second area where the City has been attempting to address water quality issues is combined sewer overflows, CSOs. A Combined Sewer Overflow occurs when storm water mixes with sewage during a wet weather event and is subsequently discharged into the Hudson River. The City has been working in conjunction with Albany, Troy, Cohoes, Green Island, and Rensselaer with CDRPC and DEC in developing a long-term CSO control plan. This project is estimated to cost in excess of \$4 million. Based on the findings and recommendations of the study, substantial improvements to the water quality of the Hudson River should result.

At present, there are a limited number of sources of direct discharge into the Hudson River from the City of Watervliet. At the Watervliet Arsenal, operational and cooling water is treated at the Arsenal sewage pretreatment plant prior to any discharge. While the City currently has five (5) outfalls, consistent with its cooperative efforts with adjacent communities, Watervliet has taken proactive steps to eliminate overflows from its combined sewers. Discharges from the City's combined sewer overflows (CSO) occur only in very wet weather. In 2003 the City was able, through a bond act grant, to remove one CSO from its inventory. Elimination of all CSOs is a primary goal for the City.

Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

The City of Watervliet completed an LWRP in 2005.

The program identified an LWRP boundary, an inventory and analysis of existing conditions, waterfront policies, proposed land and water uses and projects and implementation techniques. The Inventory and Analysis of Existing Conditions presents an overview of the City of Watervliet, a history of the Waterfront, demographic profile of the Waterfront area, and description of existing land and water uses, waterfront area zoning, recreational resources, historic resources, natural resources, infrastructure, and transportation. The Inventory and Analysis concludes with a section on Issues and Opportunities.

Key issues and opportunities identified include Hudson Shores Park, physical access to the City's waterfront, and the City's waterfront history.



The Waterfront Policies Section refines existing statewide waterfront policies that apply to the City of Watervliet's unique waterfront area. Policies include protecting and improving water resources as well as enhancing visual quality and protecting outstanding scenic resources.

The Proposed Land and Water Uses Section describes the future land and water uses anticipated as part of waterfront revitalization plans and identifies keys important projects designed to stimulate revitalization and redevelopment in the City of Watervliet. Proposed projects include park projects

(Hudson Shores and the Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail), projects to improve waterfront accessibility (pedestrian and vehicular access improvements and signage improvements), preservation projects (aesthetics, historic and cultural resources, and the Watervliet Arsenal), economic development projects (new business development and existing city businesses) and a harbor management plan.

The Techniques for Local Implementation of the Waterfront Program section describes the implementation of the City's LWRP. This section examines the extent to which the existing organizational structure of City and its land use controls can implement the policies and projects of the LWRP. The section describes means for the long-term management of Watervliet's coastal area. It specifies the authority of the City of Watervliet to implement the LWRP and the strategy that the City will follow to implement the LWRP's policies and projects. Specifically, the section mentions implementing the 19th Street Corridor Plan, describes amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance, Approval of Architectural Designs Near Parks, Site Plan Review, Adoption of a Local Consistency Law, and other private activities necessary to implement the LWRP.

The Watervliet LWRP also identifies State and Federal activities likely to affect implementation and describes the procedures and methods utilized during the planning process to obtain local support, consensus, and commitment to the LWRP among local organizations, public agencies, and the general public.

Hazardous Waste

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation monitors active and inactive hazardous waste sites. Active sites refer to businesses or industries that have, at some time in the recent past, reported shipment of waste materials to NYS DEC. According to the NYSDEC's Environmental Remediation Database, there were two sites within the City addressed under one of the Division of Environmental Remediation's (DER) remedial programs – State Superfund, Brownfield Cleanup, Environmental Restoration and Voluntary cleanup.

Perfection Plating, located on 11th Street on the City's western boundary, included a plating building and a warehouse. Work done at this facility involved plating auto brake parts with copper and plating other metal parts with chrome. Zinc and cadmium were also used for plating in the past. Wastewater from the plating operations was pretreated and discharged to the sewer system. A chromic acid tank exhaust vent and other vents were operated without NYSDEC air permits in violation of 6 NYCRR Part 212 regulations. The soils below the tank exhaust vent were notably discolored. Surficial soil samples collected from this area showed total chromium at 76,000 ppm and EP Toxic chromium at 510 ppm. Later, it was determined that the chromic acid tank inside the building had leaked and contaminated the soils beneath the building. Chromium contamination in the groundwater was detected in the on-site monitoring wells and in other monitoring wells downgradient of the site in the "Siberia area" of the Watervliet Arsenal, a listed site in the Registry (Site ID No. 401034). The plating operation at the site ceased in 1990. NYSDEC completed an Interim Remedial Measure (IRM) to identify and remove stored hazardous wastes on the property in early 1992. One hundred drums of hazardous waste, sixty-four lab packs with various small chemical bottles and 700 gallons of acid were removed in connection with this IRM.

The responsible parties signed a Consent Order for a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS). However, they were unable to do the work and did not start the project. As a result, the RI/FS was completed under State Superfund supervision. A Record of Decision (ROD) was signed in December of 1995 proposing the removal and disposal of contaminated soil and the installation

of a groundwater "cut-off" trench and treatment system. In addition, the then current property owner entered into a voluntary cleanup agreement to address the cleanup of the building's interior so that it could be returned to productive use. All remedial activities stipulated in the ROD and all of the voluntary clean-up work at the site has been completed.

The Watervliet (Fifth Avenue) site is a former manufactured gas plant (MGP) at 1801 Fifth Avenue, Watervliet. The rectangular site comprises approximately 0.69 acres. Three-fourths of the site area is covered by grass, with the rest occupied by a masonry building that has been painted and is in excellent condition. MGP operations from approximately 1865 to 1900 caused the release of low levels of contaminants into the subsurface. Site characterizations were complete in 2003, 2005 and 2007. Results showed Benzene exceedances in the shallow bedrock wells along the eastern portion of the site. National Grid submitted a Remedial Investigation work plan for the site, which was completed in February of 2008. The property was sold and is being used as an active warehouse property.

Historic and Community Character

Key Observations:

- The City of Watervliet is home to four historic buildings or sites that are listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places.
- The recently completed Local Waterfront Revitalization Program identified additional potential historic sites.
- The City has also received funding to aid in the identification of other National and State Register properties and/or districts.

Facilitated by strategies such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program, communities large and small are increasingly integrating and relying on historic preservation in their community and economic development programs. In doing so, these communities have taken steps to identify, protect, enhance and promote their historic and cultural resources.

A growing body of research indicates that although there are many misconceptions regarding the protection of historic resources, these protections help maintain and enhance property values, enhance community pride, establish a unique sense of place (allowing differentiation from surrounding communities), stabilize neighborhoods, facilitate tourism and attract additional investment into the community.



Communities that successfully use historic preservation tools as part of comprehensive community and economic development strategies implement policies, projects and programs designed to build on the characteristics, assets and strengths that make them unique and set them apart from other communities. They look for opportunities to maximize their assets by working with similar communities to protect like resources. They try to evaluate the community impacts that might result from not preserving and protecting historic resources. The City also recognizes that the decision to protect, preserve, enhance and promote historic resources does not come without costs that must be mitigated for feasible revitalization to result. During the comprehensive planning process, the City encouraged a vibrant public discourse on the role of historic preservation in contributing to the economic redevelopment of neighborhoods.

With these success factors in mind, the purpose of this section is to document the City of Watervliet's existing historic preservation efforts, assist the City in identifying the economic values and risks associated with historic resources, and provide information that will enable the City to evaluate whether historic preservation strategies are, or can be, effective and worthwhile economic revitalization tools.

City of Watervliet

Historic Resources

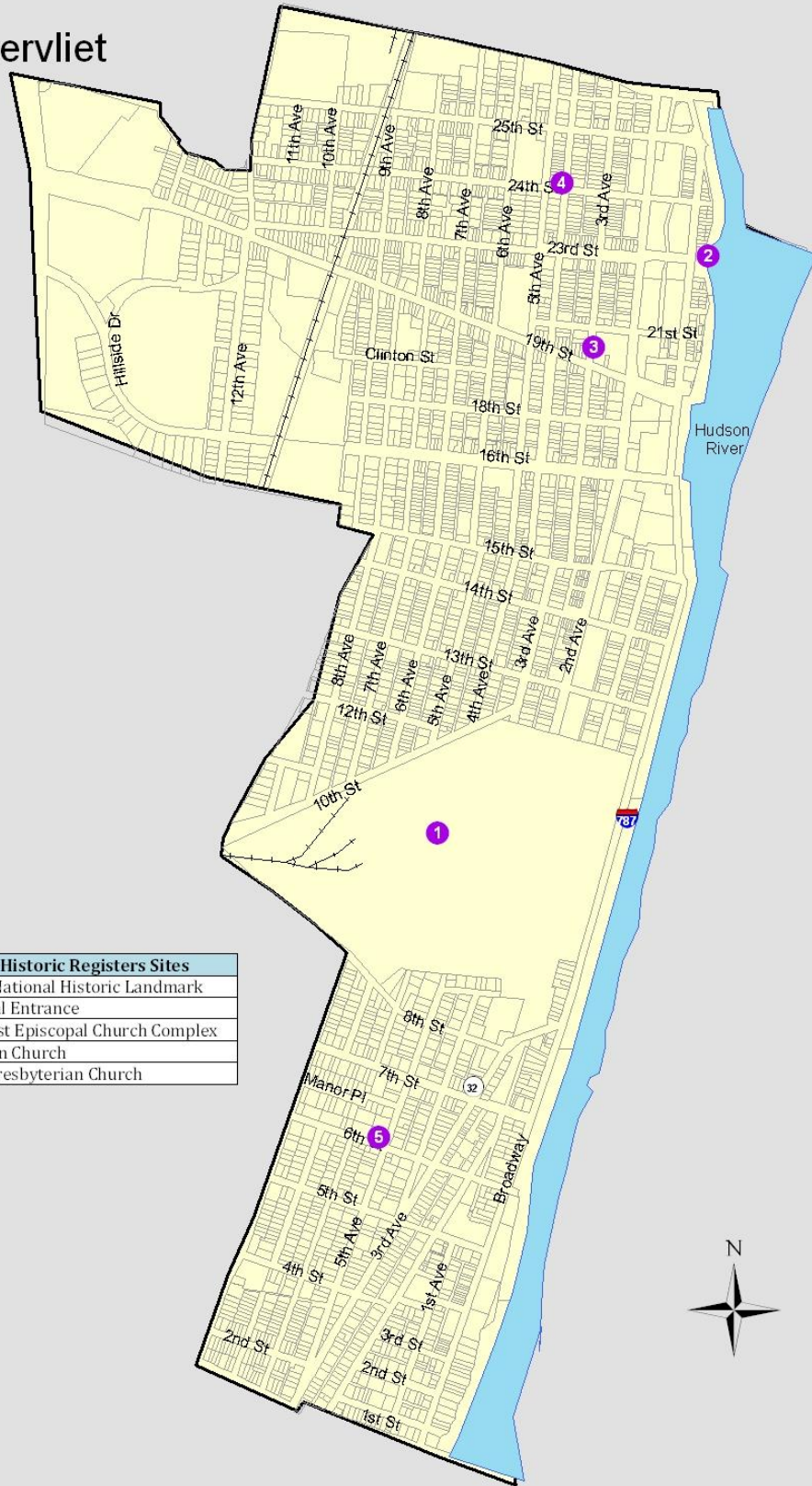
State and National Historic Registers Sites	
1	Watervliet Arsenal National Historic Landmark
2	Watervliet Erie Canal Entrance
3	Ohio Street Methodist Episcopal Church Complex
4	St Nicholas Ukrainian Church
5	Jermain Memorial Presbyterian Church

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 Miles

RIVER STREET
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

 National Historic Registry Sites

Source: City of Watervliet Office of Real Property Services



National Register of Historical Places

The National Historic Preservation Act and New York State Historic Preservation Act establish criteria by which buildings, sites, and structures are determined historic. In order to be designated historic, and listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places, buildings, structures, sites and neighborhoods are evaluated through a formal survey and nomination process, and, if determined significant based on the established criteria. Listed resources are afforded a basic level of protection from federal and state actions, but local regulation is needed to prevent demolition and other actions.

National and State Register-listed historic resources in the City of Watervliet include the following properties:

- **Watervliet Arsenal National Historic Landmark:** Located on Broadway, the Watervliet Arsenal is the oldest arsenal in continuous operation in the United States. Founded in 1813, the site encompasses approximately 112.5 acres. Approximately one-third of the landmark (located mostly east of Buffington Street) consists of military quarters and office buildings in a park-like setting with lawns, mature trees and shrubs, fountains and monuments and athletic fields and recreational buildings. The remaining two-thirds of the landmark consist of the industrial buildings, laboratories and support facilities devoted to the manufacture of weaponry. The Arsenal began with the manufacture of small, fixed ammunition and artillery accoutrements. Since 1887, the Arsenal has been the Army's primary producer of large-caliber cannon. The Arsenal has increasingly become a research and development facility for weapons with production being limited to smaller quantities of cannon of small and medium caliber.
- **Watervliet Side Cut Locks ("Double Locks"):** Located on 23rd Street at the Hudson River, the locks are constructed of cut limestone blocks, laid up in a random ashlar pattern. The stone sea wall which runs along the river bank and curves in to form the entrance to the locks is constructed in a similar fashion. The wooden gates of the lock no longer remain, but the large recesses in the walls of locks clearly mark where they were once located. According to NYS Department of Transportation officials, this site is buried in sand under the northbound exit ramp of Interstate 787 at 23rd Street.
- **Ohio Street Methodist Episcopal Church Complex:** Located at 1921 Third Avenue, it is also known as the Third Avenue Methodist Church and St. Anne's Maronite Catholic Church. The complex includes two contributing buildings – the church and an associated parish house. The church was erected in 1851 and modified c. 1895, while the parish house was constructed c. 1880. The church is architecturally significant in the local context as a largely intact example of Romanesque Revival –style ecclesiastical design. This church consists of a stone foundation with brick walls and a metal roof. The parish house is an Italianate-style house. The church, which is currently vacant, will soon be returned to active use by the St. Ann Maronite Catholic Church in Troy.
- **St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church:** Located at 4th Avenue and 24th Street, St. Nicholas is a large, rectangular-shaped one-story building with load-bearing brick walls built above footings and foundation walls of



poured concrete. The church is architecturally significant in the local context as an intact example of Ukrainian-inspired religious design. This Romanesque/Byzantine style church was erected in 1908 and is highlighted by a bell tower crowned by a multi-stage copper-clad onion dome. The church has served the Ukrainian Catholic population for 100 years and remains one of Watervliet's most distinctive ecclesiastical architectural statements.

Other Potential Historical Resources

The Hudson-Mohawk Urban Cultural Park Heritage Trail Technical Report (prepared by the Preservation/Design Group and the Reimann-Beuchner-Crandall Partnership in 1979) included a comprehensive Cultural Resources Inventory for the City of Watervliet. During the 1980s LWRP planning process, a licensed architect familiar with National Register designation criteria conducted a visual exterior inspection of the properties listed in that report. As part of the 2004 LWRP planning process, site visits were conducted to ascertain whether the structures from the 1979 report still existed and were still in a condition qualifying them as potentially eligible for the National Register. While several structures, such as Public School #1, are in a state of disrepair, they are still noteworthy for their historic significance and architectural qualities.



During the LWRP planning process in 2004, the Community Advisory Committee identified an area that, due to a concentration of potential historic resources, might serve as a basis for the creation of a local historic district. The City may consider exploring such a designation in the future if it proves to be a feasible economic development tool for redeveloping vacant and underutilized buildings. This area, encompassing Broadway west to Second Avenue and north of the Arsenal to 15th Street, includes several of the resources identified in Table 30. These resources are indicated with an asterisk (*).

Table 30: Historic Resource Inventory	
281 Broadway	329-399 Broadway
401-429 Broadway	525 & 529 Broadway
527 Broadway	Public School #1
779 Broadway	917 Broadway
937 Broadway	953 Broadway
2101 Second Avenue	2115 Second Avenue
2121 Second Avenue	Ukrainian Church
St. Patrick's Church	Watervliet City Hall (15th Street & Broadway)*
Russell Place (13th Street & 1st Avenue)*	201-209 Thirteenth Street*
1425 & 1429 Broadway*	1437 Broadway*
1445, 1449, 1453 Broadway*	United Methodist Church (1409 First Ave.) *
1432 First Avenue*	1415 First Avenue*
1436 First Avenue*	Reformed Dutch Church
201-203 16th Street	Mc Intyre Hose Company
VFW northern foundation wall ñ Erie Canal	19th Street

Source: City of Watervliet Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

More recently, the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee suggested a number of additional sites that the City might consider for the National and State Register including School No. 1, School No. 9 and the Civ (former school). The block on 19th Street from 12th Avenue to Grotto Court and Cannon Place (across from Russell Row), and the row of houses behind the St. Patrick's complex (500 block of 23rd Street) are also a possibility as they were recommended by NYSOPRHP. Other potential areas for consideration include the Andrewsville Court properties (the "canal houses" on 2nd Avenue between 13th Street and 15th Street).

Cultural Resources

Cultural Resources include the Arsenal Museum and National Historic Landmark (gun powder magazine/"Iron Building") on the Watervliet Arsenal grounds. The museum is housed in the Iron Building, which is made entirely of pre-fabricated cast iron plates, cast and wrought iron trusses, and sheet steel roofing. There are a few relics of Watervliet's pride and past on display at locations throughout the city, including a bronze cast Meneely Bell at the Public Library, which was originally a foundry site, and the Parrott Rifle and pot-bellied Civil War cannons unearthed during the I-787 construction and on display in the little park fronting City Hall.



Watervliet Historical Society

Initially started as a project in connection with the Bicentennial Celebration in the 1970s, the Watervliet Historical Society now operates a well-regarded local museum in the Dutch Reform Church complex, which also houses the City's Cultural Center. The Society hosts monthly lectures on historic topics, assists in genealogical research, and provides a home for historic artifacts of interest to students of the City and its history.

Government, Public Safety and Community Institutions

Key Observations:

- The City of Watervliet is governed by an elected Mayor and City Council.
- The City is comprised of seventeen departments and three boards/councils.
- The City has eleven recreational facilities that serve Watervliet residents.
- City residents are served by the Watervliet City School District.

Government Structure

The Mayor is Chief Executive Officer of the City of Watervliet, and presides over the Watervliet City Council. The Mayor is elected every four years and the position is part time. The Watervliet City Council is comprised of the Mayor and two Council persons elected-at-large for overlapping four year terms. Council positions are part time and duties and responsibilities are outlined in the City Charter. The City Council is the Legislative, appropriating, governing and policy determining body of City government. It approves all budgets, and set various policies for all City departments. The City Council meets on the first and third Thursdays of every month at City Hall or the City's Cultural Center. Meetings start at 7pm.



The City of Watervliet also has a General Manager who is responsible for the management of all the day to day operations of all City Departments and City Government activities and administers all aspects of the budget cycle.

The following is a brief description of the various City Departments:

- Mayor's Office – As mentioned above the Mayor's Office is the Executive Office for the City of Watervliet and works with all departments within the City to ensure quality of service for its citizens.
- City Council –The City Council is the legislative, appropriating, governing and policy determining body of the City's government.
- General Manager – As mentioned above, the City Manager is responsible for supervising and coordinating all activities and services offered by the City and implementing the policies as set forth by the City Council.
- Assessor's Office – This department handles all of the City's property information.
- Building Department – This Department is responsible for issuing permits and inspecting property.
- City Clerk – Responsible for issuing licenses and permits in the City, as well as serving as Clerk and Recording Secretary for the City Council.
- Civil Service – Oversees all aspects of Civil Service law and administers testing for the City, School District and Housing Authority.
- Corporation Counsel – Handles all legal aspects of the day to day business for the City.

- Finance Department – Responsible for collection of tax payments, payment of parking tickets and all other aspects of the City's finances.
- Fire Department/EMS – Provides 24-hour emergency services (more detailed information is presented below).
- Highway Department – Handles the maintenance of all City streets, alleys and public right of ways, as well as the City buildings.
- Parks & Recreation – Oversees all City Parks, runs all recreation programs for the City and oversees the City Pool in the summer.
- Police Department – Provides 24-hour service (more detailed information is presented below).
- Purchasing Department – Administration of centralized purchasing activities for all City agencies and departments as well as purchase orders, RFP information, and all accounts payable information.
- Planning and Community Revitalization Department – Charged with helping develop a comprehensive plan and needed zoning reforms, serves as planning staff to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, and heads the economic development and grant seeking activities of the City, as well as serving as staff for the Local Development Corporation.
- Water and Sewer Departments – Responsible for all water and sewer functions in the City.
- Refuse and Recycling Department – Responsible for removal and disposal of all waste and recycled items in the City.

The City also has the following boards and councils: Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Local Development Corporation, and Watervliet Business Council.

- Planning Board: The Planning Board is authorized to approve plans and will review and make recommendations on the Comprehensive Plan. Pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding between the City Council, the Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Planning Board, the Planning Board conducts site plan assessments as well as review of all proposed signage in the City. The Planning Board meets on the third Wednesday of every month.
- Zoning Board of Appeals: The Board of Appeals hears and determine appeals from any refusal of a building permit or certificate of occupancy by the Building Inspector, Housing Inspector or Code Enforcement Officer. Due to the extensively built-out nature of the City, any significant change in use on any parcel of land in the City comes before the Zoning Board. The Zoning Board meets on the second Wednesday of every month.
- Watervliet Business Council: The Business Council meets on a "to be announced" basis.
- City of Watervliet Local Development Corporation: Created in 1999, The City of Watervliet Local Development Corporation is a not-for-profit public benefit corporation of the State of New York, formed under the provisions of section 1411 of the Not-For-Profit Corporation Law of New York State. The Corporation operates in the City of Watervliet for the exclusively charitable or public purposes of relieving and reducing unemployment, promoting and providing for additional and maximum employment, bettering and maintaining job opportunities, instructing or training individuals to improve or develop their capabilities for



such jobs, carrying on scientific research for the purpose of aiding the City by attracting new industry to the community or area or by encouraging the development of, or retention of, an industry in the City, and lessening the burdens of government and acting in the public interest.

Public Safety

Law Enforcement

The Watervliet Police department currently has 26 sworn police officers including a Chief, 2 civilian telecommunication specialists, a secretary and four part time school crossing guards. In addition to the patrol division, the department also has an investigative unit, traffic safety unit, bicycle patrol and a school resource officer. One officer is also assigned to act as a liaison with the local neighborhood watch program. The department handles an average of 1,400 calls per month.

Fire

The Watervliet Fire Department is the Fire and Emergency Services branch of the City of Watervliet municipal government and has been housed in the Thomas M. McCormack Fire Headquarters on 2nd Avenue and 13th Street in the City since 1970. The Department consists, currently, of twenty-one full time professional firefighters. The Department operates under a four platoon system. On duty work shifts are on a 24 hour schedule.

The Fire Department is National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant. The Incident Command System (ICS) is a coordinated effort that brings together the major elements of an operation - specifically, command, operations, planning, and logistics under a unified command. The ICS is the backbone of Emergency Services response in the City of Watervliet.

The Mayor, as the Chief Executive Officer, has the responsibility to order or declare a "State of Emergency" as prescribed under New York State and Albany County Disaster Control Programs. The General Manager is the Commissioner of Public Safety and is ultimately responsible for all emergency operation of the Fire and Police Departments. The Fire Chief is the ranking officer and chief administrator of the day to day operations of the Fire Department. Ranking below the Fire Chief are Battalion Chiefs, Captains, Lieutenants and Firefighters. The City of Watervliet's Fire Department provides the following services:

- Fire Suppression and Control
- Fire Prevention and Public Relations
- Fire Investigation
- Hazardous Material Incident Response
- Emergency Medical Service Response (EMT and PARAMEDIC)
- Emergency Transportation
- Natural Gas, Carbon Monoxide and Electrical Emergency Response
- Emergency Rescue Response
- Mutual Aid to Neighboring Communities
- Non Emergency Service for Public Assistance

In 2009, the City began ambulance service through the fire department. The ambulance service averages three transports a day with improved response time and continuity of care.

Educational Services

Public Schools

The City of Watervliet is served by the Watervliet City School District, which includes an elementary school and a Junior/Senior High School. During the 2007-2008 school year, the District enrolled 1,339 students and employed 120 teachers. The district also has a pre-K program that enrolled an additional 54 students. Of the 703 grade K-6 students, 46% were eligible for the free lunch program. Of the 636 students enrolled in the Junior/Senior high school, 36% were eligible for the free lunch program. In comparison, approximately 36% of New York State students were eligible for the free lunch program. There were 81 graduates during the 2007-2008 school year from the Watervliet Junior/Senior High School; 98% of those received a Regents diploma, 22% received a Regents diploma with advanced designation. Approximately 80% of all students in New York State received a Regents diploma and 40% received a Regents diploma with advanced designation. To earn a Regents diploma with advanced designation, the student must pass eight Regents exams. Among 2008 graduates of Watervliet High School, 26% were planning to attend a four year college and 62% were planning to attend a two year college. Seven percent had other post high school plans. In comparison, 48% of graduates statewide were planning to attend a four year college and 30% were planning to attend a two year college.



The District spent \$12,907 per pupil for the 2007-2008 academic year. Comparable data for New York State as a whole was unavailable.

School dropout rates have remained rather steady over the past three school years. The dropout rate for Watervliet High School during the 2005-2006 school year was at 7% compared to 4.4% for New York State as a whole. For the 2006-2007 school year the drop out rate fell 1% to 6% and remained at 6% for the 2007-2008 academic year. The drop-out rate for New York State was 2.9% for the 2007-2008 academic year. Across the state, increasing emphasis is being placed on graduation rates for high school students. Statewide it is reports that 36% of all students do not graduate on time (in four years). The trend for those graduated receiving Regents diplomas at Watervliet High School has seen fluctuation in the past three years. The percentage of students receiving Regents diplomas for the 2005-2006 school year was at 100%, the percentage decreased to 95% for the 2006-2007 school year and then rose to 98% for the 2007-2008 school year.

Watervliet Elementary School is in a grouping with other similar area elementary level schools in urban or suburban school districts with high student needs in relation to district resources. The schools in this group are in the middle range of student needs for elementary level schools in these districts. These include Carroll Hill School, PS12 and PS14 in the Troy City School District; Van Rensselaer Elementary School in the Rensselaer City School District; Arbor Hill, Delaware



Community, Eagle Point, Pine Hills and Thomas S O'Brien Academy of Science Elementary Schools in the Albany City School District.

Watervliet Junior/Senior High School is in a grouping of similar area high schools that serve similar students and have similar resources. According to the New York State Department of Education, all schools in this group are secondary level schools in urban or suburban school districts with high student needs in relation to district resources. Further, the schools in this group are in the middle range of student needs for secondary level schools in these districts. Some of the area high schools in this grouping are Albany High in the Albany City School District, Cohoes High in the Cohoes City School District and Troy High in the Troy City School District.

The Watervliet school district has an \$8.6 million dollar capital construction project underway at Watervliet Elementary. The project is being financed by State Aid and EXCEL Grant funds with no local taxpayer contribution needed. There is also a construction project at the Watervliet Junior/Senior High School including construction of 12 new classrooms and a new state-of-the-art gymnasium as well as numerous renovations on other areas of the school. This project is to be completed in September 2010.

Private Schools

For many years there was a strong tradition of parochial school education in the City. However, due to the decline in the percentage of Catholic institutions, all of the formerly Catholic parochial schools have closed. St. Brigid's School in Port Schuyler closed at the end of the 2009-2010 school year.

Other Community Institutions

Library

The Watervliet Public Library is located at 1501 Broadway in the City of Watervliet. Founded in 1953, the library became part of the Upper Hudson Library System in 1980. The Upper Hudson Library System is a federation of public libraries in Albany and Rensselaer Counties.

Parks and Recreation

The City of Watervliet is home to several parks and playground, a pool and other recreational facilities a complete list of which is below.

Table 31: Recreation Inventory	
Parks and Playgrounds	
Seventh Street Park	This park is located in the area of Seventh Street and Second Avenue in the Port Schuyler section of the City. Park amenities include a basketball court, swings and playground apparatus, and a Spray Pool that is operated in the summer months, weekdays Monday through Friday.
Pershing Green Memorial Park	This park area, named after famed General "Black Jack" Pershing, is located in the area of Second Avenue and Fourth Street and provides a park green space.
Red's Field	This playground and park area is located at Eighth Street and Third Avenue in the Port Schuyler section of the City. The park amenities include a baseball/softball field and a basketball court.

Clinton Park	Located at Clinton Street and Avenue A, this playground provides basketball courts, swings and a neighborhood Spray/Wading Pool for younger children that is operated during the summer months.
Brotherhood Park	This park is the home of the Watervliet Little League. It is located at Twenty-Fifth Street and Sixth Avenue. The playground amenities at the facility include basketball courts and a spray pool.
Mayor James Cavanaugh Hudson Shores Park	This 9 acre park area is located along the Hudson River adjacent to I-787 between 16 th Street and 23 rd Street with an entrance at 23 rd Street and provides a river walk and fishing and picnicking opportunities, restrooms, a pavilion and Rusty Anchor, a barge restaurant.
Bike Trails	
Hudson River Bike Path	The 4th Street parking area in Watervliet is the northern terminus of the Hudson River Bike Path that runs from Corning Preserve in Albany to Watervliet. This section of the regional bike path system connects with sections through the City of Cohoes, along the Mohawk River in the Town of Colonie and westward to the Town of Niskayuna.
Other Facilities	
Veterans Memorial Swimming Pool and Park	The City of Watervliet operates and maintains a municipal swimming pool that is open to residents of the City seven days a week (weather permitting) during the summer months. There is a passive park next to the pool which includes a memorial, with flower garden and seating.
The Dome/Watervliet Veterans Memorial Recreational Facility	An indoor facility that provides a year round location for recreational activities. The facility is located at Second Avenue and Thirteenth Street. Some of the activities at the Dome include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital District Girls High School Basketball League - summer months • Capital District Boys Junior Varsity League - summer months • Coach George Mardigan Basketball • Ice -skating in the winter months • Farmer's Market every Tuesday during the summer months
Watervliet Civic Center	Located at First Avenue and 14th Street, this facility houses many programs for young people including golf lessons, basketball, and billiards.
Schuyler Flatt	A National Register listing, Schuyler Flatts contains intact features and artifactual evidence associated with the region's development. Located in the Town of Colonie immediately to the south of Watervliet, Schuyler Flats was rehabbed by Colonie with assistance from the City. The area is a multi-use facility with open space that can be used for recreational purposes as well as areas with historic markers that identify the historic nature of the site. A foundation owns the property and the Town of Colonie maintains it. There is an entrance to the park in Watervliet at 1st Street and Broadway, or via the Fourth Street trailhead.

City of Watervliet Recreation and Community Services



The Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail Crossroads Connections Study

In July 2003, The Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail Crossroads Connections Study was completed. Funded by grants from the Hudson River Valley Greenway, the purpose of the study was to identify off-road alternatives for continuing the Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail between the City of Albany and the Village of Waterford and to examine the need for improved signage along the on-road portion of the Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail in Albany County. Over a seven-month period, the Hudson River Valley Greenway, Albany County Department of Economic Development, Conservation and Planning, and the Capital District Transportation Committee conducted a public outreach process to solicit input from the municipalities, stakeholders and residents. This process included three public meetings to discuss trail opportunities.



The Mohawk Hudson Study proposed development of an additional trail segment to be located in the City of Watervliet. These included a 7,500-foot shoreline connection between the trail end at Fourth Street and the self-contained trail in Hudson Shores Park that terminates at 15th Street. The trail would require cutting into the I-787 embankment, and sensitive trail design would be needed to protect against disturbance of the shoreline and any local aquatic habitats. Due to cost considerations, an alternative route along the City-side of I-787 is being considered.

Grant Awards

- The City's Planning and Community Revitalization Department received a grant for \$50,000 for a consultant on behalf of the City, with the Village of Menands and the Town of Colonie, under the supervision of the Capital District Transportation Committee, to study how to more effectively use Route 32 in the Port Schuyler area to accommodate additional workers traveling to the Watervliet Arsenal, as well as encourage businesses along the route without adversely impacting Port Schuyler neighborhoods.
- Further on the transportation front, the City has received a \$137,000 grant to subsidize a local transit route throughout the City and the Village/Town of Green Island to provide local transportation and interconnection with CDTA regionally.
- A \$55,000 planning study for possible consolidation of water supply and filtration with the Town of Guilderland has been awarded by the NYS Department of State.
- A \$42,000 grant to reduce the pollution from diesel powered vehicles was awarded to the City of Watervliet in July by the NYS Department of Transportation and the Capital District Transportation Committee. The grant awards funds from the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) to Watervliet to improved air quality from City-owned diesel vehicles by retrofitting older vehicles with pollution reducing technology. Fourteen city vehicles will be retrofitted with diesel oxidation catalysts and closed crankcase ventilation devices which will reduce carbon monoxide emissions by 60% and hydrocarbon pollution by 75%. It is anticipated that the Federal and state government will mandate substantial pollution reduction steps in all diesel power vehicles within the next year. Watervliet moved forward with the program this year to reduce the carbon footprint of its Public

Works and Fire Department vehicles and at the same time take advantage of the grant that is available now. The upgrades are expected to be completed in four to six months.

- \$650,000 CDBG 2008 Comprehensive Housing, Façade and Microenterprise Grant for the Third Avenue Corridor awarded through the NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal Office for Small Cities.
- \$400,000 Housing Rehabilitation Grant for Low and Moderate Income Persons for affordable housing units in Watervliet, sponsored by Albany County Action Partnership.
- \$700,000 Affordable Housing Rehabilitation Grant through the Albany County Executive for housing rehabilitation grants in the County. Watervliet LMI persons received \$261,000, approximately 45% of the grants funded.
- \$75,000 grant for City of Watervliet Apartment Management Program. Pilot program by the city to foster an increase in affordable housing in the city and benefit senior citizen home owners by assisting them in renting their vacant apartments was converted to a First Time Homebuyer Program. Funding of \$75,000 provided by the City of Watervliet Local Development Corporation matches the \$75,000 grant from the Albany County Executive.
- \$750,000 NYS grant for Watervliet Economic Development program. Grant is to support creation of 50 new manufacturing jobs at two companies located in the Watervliet Arsenal in cooperation with the Arsenal Business & Technology Partnership. A total of 45 of the 50 jobs are designated to benefit low/moderate income persons. \$375,000 of this grant will be repaid to the City over an 8 year period for use by the City to develop new economic development programs.
- \$40,000 from the ABTP to develop an Integrated Land Use Study for the City of Watervliet and the Arsenal Partnership.
- \$10,000.00 from the Hudson River Greenway Community Grant Program for study of historic preservation in the City. That is matched by in-kind services from the City staff and additional volunteer support from the Watervliet Historical Society. City summer staff resources have been used for the past two years to provide a data base of all structures in Watervliet, with an eye toward multiple use of the data – potential historic districts, grant support documentation, and GIS information.
- \$265,000 from the NY Main Street Grant program is intended to support façade and rehabilitation work in a six block area of the Port Schuyler section of the City.
- \$290,000 CDBG Rehabilitation Grant for property owned by LMI senior citizens has just been received.
- \$310,000 CDBG public facilities grant was awarded for rehabilitation of City infrastructure.
- \$32,000 planning grant from NYS Archives was granted to develop a needs assessment for a community GIS system.
- \$25,000 technical assistant grant was received from NYS Office for Community Renewal in 2008 to help fund comprehensive plan items.



Vision and Goals

A City vision and set of planning goals form the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan. The visioning process began with a community-wide visioning workshop held on September 10, 2009 at the Watervliet Senior Center. At this meeting, River Street Planning presented an overview of the comprehensive planning effort and explained the visioning process. Participants were asked to write down three words/phrases of how they would like the City to be described in 5 to 10 years. The General categories identified by the participants included the following:

- Historic preservation
- Small Businesses
- Enhanced Schools
- Green space / Recreation
- Utilize strategic location
- Code Enforcement
- Excellent Public Services
- Safe
- Housing
- Waterfront
- Streets / Streetscapes
- Community retail / Businesses

Participants were then asked to finish the following three statements:

- “What I love about the City of Watervliet...”
- “Things I would change about Watervliet...”
- “When these things are preserved or changed, Watervliet will...”

Participants identified many things that they love about the City of Watervliet. The main theme that emerged was that Watervliet has small town charm, but the benefits of being located near a major metropolitan area. Residents also identified that they love the community facilities (schools, churches, parks, library, and senior center) and programs/events, its location and easy access, the river, the Arsenal, security from police/low crime, historic structures, and the people that live and work there.

In discussing community challenges and things they would like to change, residents cited aesthetic improvements (bury wires underground, greenery along Broadway to buffer 787, control over signage, improving commercial facades, better street lighting, and clean up businesses), improved zoning and better code enforcement, improved public transportation (in the City and for seniors), increasing the number of homeowners and addressing absentee landlords, vacant and underutilized buildings (old schools, churches and industrial buildings), the Dome (more programs/events and improvements to the facility), more reasons for people to stop in the city and not just drive through to Troy, transportation improvements (uneven sidewalks, roads with curb cuts, access to 787, pedestrian and bike access, parking for businesses), and the City is almost built out.

Finally, residents described their preferred future for the City. They stated they wanted a future where the City will:

- Be a community based small city - inviting, wholesome and vibrant.
- Be clean, well maintained and attractive.
- Have a defined downtown/central business district.
- Have commercial design standards.
- Inviting places to go – variety of storefronts, beautiful buildings, more green space, and outdoor eating establishments.
- Capitalize on its identity and promote/market its assets.
- Have a destination/attraction that will create jobs and make people want to stop and explore the City.
- Have a revitalized mix of commercial and residential areas – vacant buildings will be redeveloped
- Encourage more young people to remain

Using feedback from the visioning workshop, along with issues identified at the focus group meetings, the Consultant developed a draft vision statement and set of goals for the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee to consider. The goals address an attractive built environment, transportation, infrastructure, housing, historic preservation, land management, economic development, waterfront, and recreation. The vision statement and goals are listed briefly below. The Action Plan is organized by the goals, and provides specific action items for the City to consider in supporting each goal.

The purpose of a vision statement is to provide direction regarding the community's growth and development, serving as a foundation underlying the development of goals and strategies for implementation. Reflecting the common values of local residents, it expresses the "ideal future" that the community hopes to attain. Residents and leaders of the City of Watervliet have established the following vision statement for Watervliet:

In the coming decades, the City of Watervliet will be a destination of choice. The Vision of our future will include the following:

- *People will be attracted to Watervliet due to its ideal location, easily accessible shops, restaurants, affordable and inviting housing, beautiful parks and recreational areas.*
- *Watervliet's well maintained, safe and clean streets will be easily navigable by pedestrians while efficiently accommodating cars, buses and bicycles.*
- *Watervliet is a community that honors diversity and will continue to provide for a diversity of jobs, population and services.*
- *The schools will be competitive to attract families with children and provide educational opportunities that contribute to an enhanced level of community pride and involvement, resulting in a strong sense of place with respect to Watervliet and its citizens.*
- *New comprehensive zoning will enhance quality growth for residents and business owners of the City and ensure neighborhood stability.*
- *Through planned revitalization of neighborhoods and commercial areas, the City will foster a safe urban community, encouraging economic development while preserving its historic past and industrial heritage.*

To fulfill this vision and maintain the City of Watervliet as a good place to live, work and visit today and in the future, the following goals have been established:

- Goal 1: Create an attractive and functional built environment that meets the needs of existing residents and businesses while creating opportunities to attract new residents and economic opportunities.**
- Goal 2: Provide a variety of high-quality housing opportunities**
- Goal 3: Foster a business group to identify and develop economic initiatives that support the social fabric of the community, enhance the City's commercial districts, provide strong employment opportunities and meet resident needs for goods and services.**
- Goal 4: Offer high-quality recreation amenities**
- Goal 5: Maintain and upgrade the City's infrastructure**
- Goal 6: Preserve and promote Watervliet's community character and the City's rich cultural and historic resources**
- Goal 7: Upgrade and maintain the City's Transportation System**
- Goal 8: Improve land management by updating the City's Zoning Ordinance**
- Goal 9: Improve access to the waterfront by implementing the City's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP)**

These goals guided the comprehensive planning process and allowed for the development of the initiatives and projects outlined in the Action Plan which follows.

Action Plan

The action plan component of the Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide City leaders and other stakeholders, both current and future, with guidance regarding the kind of place residents would like Watervliet to be in the future, a set of goals for achieving that future vision, and a set of implementation strategies that will facilitate the accomplishment of each goal. The stakeholders and partners to be involved and, where appropriate, a list of funding sources are provided for each action plan element.

The action plan focuses and consolidates the inventory of initiatives that the City of Watervliet will pursue. This element will build on the vision and goals that were developed by the Advisory Committee and residents of Watervliet. The Action Plan will guide decision-making by concisely focusing resources on shared goals, objectives, and implementation strategies. Further, the plan will clarify roles, responsibilities and commitments of key stakeholders and developers.

The action plan describes the specific actions and tasks the City will take to advance each of the key initiatives and projects, defining project tasks, schedule, City and stakeholder roles and responsibilities and funding needs. The Action Plan is organized into sections based on the goals set during the visioning and goal setting process.

Plan Implementation

Plan implementation should begin when the City Council formally adopts this document. The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan means that City leaders and the citizens of Watervliet accept this plan as the guide to future decision making and development in Watervliet. Municipal leaders and other stakeholders should use the plan to assist in making decisions and setting priorities, including those established by the annual budget.

As required under state law, any new land use regulations or amendments in the City must be in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, an important role of the City Planning Board will be to review this document to make sure that the goals and ideas of the plan are integrated into land use and development decisions. State law also stipulates that all plans for capital projects of another governmental agency on land included in the plan take the plan into consideration. This provision is designed to prevent government actions from disregarding the recommendations of a comprehensive plan.

The involvement of local residents will be vital in helping the City to successfully achieve the goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Although some actions will be appropriate for implementation by the City Council and/or municipal department staff, others will call for participation by civic organizations, public/private partnerships, citizen committees, and other entities. It is expected that the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee will play a major role in developing partnerships with other members of the community, local businesses and organizations, state agencies, and others who can assist with implementation efforts.

Periodic Review

The City Council should arrange for periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan *at least* every five years. The review will assess the need for amending or updating the plan to address emerging issues as appropriate.

To keep plan implementation on schedule, the City's Department of Planning and Community Revitalization and/or Planning Board will be charged with annual review and evaluation of plan implementation for a period of not less than five years. The City's Department of Planning and Community Revitalization and/or Planning Board will prepare an annual status report on the accomplishments of the last 12 months to inform residents about what is being implemented. The status report will be presented at a public meeting, perhaps incorporated with the Mayor's annual State of the City address.

Action Plan

The projects proposed in this Comprehensive Plan are described in the following Action Plan, which is organized by goal area. For each proposed activity the Action Plan identifies detailed implementation steps, time frame for completion, potential partners and stakeholders, a budget estimate for the City to undertake the project, and potential funding sources.

It should be noted that the expense of implementation will not be taken on by the City all at once. Also state funding opportunities may be more readily available to the City of Watervliet with an adopted comprehensive plan.

Costs have been estimated for each project listed below. Some projects may be completed by municipal staff, while other projects will require funding commitments. We have limited the amount of the municipal budget to be used as a funding source, recognizing the concern to keep tax rates low in the City. Likewise, a good potential source of funding for any project is through a State or Federal Legislative representative. These “member items” have not been listed as a source of funding as they would be included under most of these projects but need to be used judiciously. To the extent possible, the City of Watervliet will use non-municipal funds (state and federal grants among others) to implement the following projects. See attached spreadsheets for a projection of funding source amounts for each action item.

Goal 1: Create an attractive and functional built environment that meets the needs of existing residents and businesses while creating opportunities to attract new residents and economic opportunities.

Action 1.1 Create attractive gateways

The City of Watervliet will work with the New York State Department of Transportation to improve traffic circulation and develop distinctive and welcoming gateways into the City along key transportation corridors. Improvement and development of these areas will strengthen and support commercial and economic development in Watervliet. The Route 32 Linkage Study (currently underway) has identified the intersection of 1st and 3rd as a Gateway Improvement Project. Participants at public workshops were very supportive of this project.

Implementation Steps:

- Identify key gateways. Suggested gateways include 25th Street at Broadway, Second Avenue at 19th Street, 19th Street at Grotto Court, and the intersection at 1st Street and Route 32/Third Avenue (at the border with the Town of Colonie).
- Develop designs for selected gateways.
- Partner with appropriate agencies to initiate a series of improvements including building rehabilitation, façade improvement and/or painting, streetscape improvements, enhancement of entrances, exits and parking areas around businesses, well-designed and placed signage and overall beautification.

Timeframe: Short-term (planning/design and secure funding); Medium-term (implement gateway improvements)

Estimated Costs: \$50,000 for planning and design; \$150,000 for each gateway constructed

Stakeholders/Partners:

- NYSDOT
- City of Watervliet Department of Public Works
- City Council
- Local business owners
- Residents/Volunteer Committee

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYS Department of Transportation
- Municipal Budget
- NYSDHCR Main Street Program

Action 1.2 Continue to enforce building maintenance standards

During the planning process residents and stakeholders expressed concern that additional efforts are needed to more strongly enforce building and property maintenance codes. Residents also stated that property maintenance and elimination of nuisances of all types have a direct and obvious impact on neighborhood investment, pride, and quality of life.

To achieve this goal, City staff anticipates evaluating existing staff capacity, ongoing code enforcement efforts and needs, and the effectiveness of existing penalties (See Action 1.3) for noncompliance. Based on this evaluation, code enforcement programs would be modified and strengthened, which may involve the hiring of additional personnel, training, outreach and support. Existing penalties and enforcement procedures would also be evaluated in terms of effectiveness, and strengthened as needed to accomplish nuisance abatement goals.

The City of Watervliet's Building Department currently inspects rental property prior to occupancy by a new tenant and then every three years if there is no change in occupancy. The City should continue code inspection of rental property.

In order to better enforce building maintenance standards, including rental property inspections, the City will consider additional staff resources to increase code enforcement efforts, enabling it to proactively and consistently apply codes throughout the City. These new positions would be largely self-supporting, paid for by fees charged for each inspection and enforcement fines. Also see Action 1.3.

Implementation Steps:

- Continue Citywide intensive sweep for code violations.
- Continue to identify ways of improving the administrative efficiency of the department and increasing interdepartmental cooperation.
- Hold focus group meetings with residents to determine issues/problems with code enforcement and ways to make the enforcement of codes and building regulations more consistent.
- Review and, as necessary, revise municipal code.
- Meet with stakeholders to review the results from the focus group meeting and develop a plan of action.
- Review rental inspection schedule to determine if there are any rental apartments that are overdue for inspection. If there are, make those units a priority to be inspected.
- Meet with Building Department Staff to determine what could be done to improve code enforcement services.
- Review current policy of inspecting rental units every 3 years.
- Evaluate staff capacity, ongoing code enforcement efforts and needs, and the effectiveness of existing penalties for noncompliance. Existing penalties and enforcement procedures would also be evaluated in terms of effectiveness and strengthened as needed to accomplish nuisance abatement goals. (See Action 1.3)
- Based on the evaluation, code enforcement programs would be modified and strengthened, which may involve hiring of additional personnel, training, outreach and support.

- Review schedule of variances to ensure that recipient has met the stipulations of the variance.
- Consider posting the addresses of repeat violators on the City's website if they have been repeatedly notified about code violations and have not addressed the cited problems.
- Evaluate the development of initiatives to assist low income property owners to address code violations.
- Consider establishing a demolition program that aids in the creation of redevelopment sites.
- Consider adopting a demolition by neglect ordinance to prevent abandonment or poor maintenance (particularly of historic properties).
- Prioritize recommendations.
- Implement preferred recommendations.

Timeframe: Short –Term – Initiate in first year of Comprehensive Plan implementation

Estimated Cost: Municipal Staff time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Building Department
- City of Watervliet Planning and Community Revitalization Department
- Watervliet Housing Authority
- Property Owners
- Renters

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget
- NYS OCR
- User fees
- Fines

Action 1.3 Consider adoption of increased fee schedule for code violations

As described in Action 1.2, there are housing and building stock and code enforcement issues in the City of Watervliet. It is important to upgrade and protect the existing housing and building stock. City staff suggested increasing fines for code violators (particularly for repeat offences) as a way to ensure that residents and City property owners will abide by the laws and reduce the overall number of code violations in the City.

Implementation Steps:

- Review current fines/fees for all code enforcement offenses and propose new fee schedule.
- Adopt new fee schedule.
- Publicize new fee schedule to residents and businesses on the City website; on the WVLTV Cable Access channel; and in the Watervliet Housing Authority Newsletter.

Timeframe: Short Term – Initiate in first year of Comprehensive Plan implementation

Estimated Cost: Municipal Staff time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Building Department

- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- City Residents

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget
- User fees

Action 1.4 Continue providing code enforcement education

The City's Building Department recently sent out "Welcome to Watervliet" letters to tenants, homeowners, absentee landlords, and businesses to educate the community about issues relating to code enforcement. Education efforts should be continued through the development of a brochure. Code enforcement information should be posted on the City's website and WVLTV Cable Access channel.

Implementation Steps:

- As a supplement to the "Welcome to Watervliet" letters, prepare a brochure educating residents and businesses about existing codes in the City. Brochures can be made available at City events, City Hall, and the Public Library, among other events and sites.
- Provide content to be included in the Watervliet Housing Authority Newsletter and Welcome Brochure and the WVLTV Cable Access channel.
- Update City web site with information on code enforcement, including adding a "new homeowners" page on the City web site to inform about garbage pick-up, recycling, and other services.
- Ensure that all codes are available and searchable through the City's web-site.
- With every city mailing (water and tax bills, etc.) educational reminders of acceptable property maintenance standards should be included.
- Provide a web link on the City's website to the NYS Property Maintenance Code and the City's resolution adopting the code.

Timeframe: Short Term – Initiate in first year of Comprehensive Plan implementation

Estimated Cost: \$2,500 for brochure printing and municipal staff time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Building Department
- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- Watervliet Housing Authority
- City Residents and Businesses

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget

Action 1.5 Consider consolidating services with nearby municipalities

The City of Watervliet is completing a study with the City of Cohoes to determine the feasibility of sharing services between the Cohoes and Watervliet Fire Departments. This past year both cities are supporting an Albany County application to review public safety dispatching services and determine ways to minimize the costs of such services with a combined grant. In 2008 the two

cities, along with the Village/Town of Green Island, came together to implement a change to the municipal Mutual Aid policy, allowing for the automatic dispatch of an engine or ladder from one community to another on alarm calls for fires in any of the three communities.

The City of Watervliet should review and determine if there are other services that could be consolidated with one or more of the neighboring municipalities. In 2009 the City of Watervliet and the Town/Village of Green Island jointly purchased a piece of fire apparatus which neither municipality could have afforded to acquire alone.

Implementation Steps:

- Meet with the Mayors/Supervisors of surrounding municipalities and appropriate staff to determine additional services that could be shared among the municipalities.
- The City should also meet with surrounding communities regarding storm run-off issues to develop a strategy.

Timeframe: Short Term – Initiate in first year of Comprehensive Plan implementation

Estimated Cost: \$25,000 for a study and municipal staff time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet
- Other municipalities as mutual needs are identified
- NYS Department of State

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYS Department of State

Action 1.6 Address Problem Structures

During the planning process, frustration was expressed by residents about problem structures (repeated code violations, not maintaining exteriors, neglectful absentee landlords, etc). The City should develop a comprehensive strategy to address problem structures. City officials could use data collected on the number of code violations, police incidents, EMS and fire calls and other quality of life indices for each neighborhood to track problems. The City would annually review its investments in each neighborhood with regard to community programs and services, facade improvements, home rehabilitation, infrastructure, streetscape and landscaping improvements.

The City will also consider additional staff resources to increase code enforcement efforts (See Action 1.2), enabling it to proactively and consistently apply codes throughout the City rather than responding to crisis situations. In addition, the City will evaluate the need for code changes to standardize penalties for various violations (See Action 1.3).

The City already has a provision in its code to address public nuisance abatement (§202-2.1—202-16). The City should increase its efforts to address those nuisance properties and promote the reporting of nuisance properties to the City by its residents and others.

Implementation Steps:

- Develop a system for City Departments to report problem structures to the Building Department.

- Create a database to more completely report building related data (code violations, police incidents, etc). Ideally the database would be part of the City's GIS system once that system is fully operational.
- Meet quarterly with stakeholders to review data and progress on the program.

Timeframe: Medium - Term

Estimated Cost: Municipal Staff time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Building Department
- City of Watervliet Planning and Community Revitalization Department
- City of Watervliet Police Department
- City of Watervliet Fire Department
- City Council

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget
- Fines

Goal 2: Provide a variety of high-quality housing opportunities

Action 2.1 Identify areas for housing rehabilitation

The quality of the City's existing housing stock was identified as an issue during meetings with the advisory committee, housing providers and City department heads. Almost 61% of all housing units in the City were built prior to 1940, suggesting that without adequate maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation, overall housing conditions may decline further. The City should continue to actively submit grant applications for housing rehabilitation assistance.

Implementation Steps:

- Complete the survey of all housing units in the City. Based on results, prioritize areas where the housing need appears to be greatest and define boundaries for these areas.
- Conduct a more formal housing conditions and income survey of the priority areas.
- Prioritize those areas with greatest needs in terms of housing conditions and income.
- Submit applications to funding agencies for financial assistance.
- Develop outreach, education and promotion materials to help market the rehabilitation program to appropriate audiences and encourage citizen participation.
- Revise local code governing multiple residential unit conversions and density.
- Consider creation of local and/or state historic districts as a possible source of funding for housing rehabilitation.

Timeframe: Short Term – Initiate in first year of Comprehensive Plan implementation;

Mid Term – complete development of historic districts process and necessary legislation

Estimated Cost: Municipal staff time – Identify target areas for housing rehabilitation;

\$405,000 – Implement housing rehabilitation programs for each identified area

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet General Manager
- City of Watervliet Planning and Community Revitalization Department
- City of Watervliet Building Department
- Watervliet Housing Authority
- Property Owners

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYS OCR Small Cities Program
- NYS DHCR HOME Program
- NYS Main Street Program (for residential upper floors of commercial buildings)

Action 2.2 Utilize NYS incentives for home reinvestment

One of the most critical housing issues identified is the need to rehabilitate homes. The City should develop tax incentives which encourage homeowners to rehabilitate properties, and offer information on types of improvements that increase tax assessments. To encourage continued enhancement of Watervliet's residential neighborhoods, the City should consider adoption of the New York State 421(f) tax relief program. The 421(f) tax incentive program can be implemented by municipal resolution. The tax relief program can be used for buildings at least five years old for capital improvements that cost \$3,000 or more and increase the property's value by at least \$5,000. The exemption is limited to the first \$80,000 increase in value. Upon application to the assessor, the property owner may receive a 100% exemption on the increased assessed value of the property resulting from the improvement for the first year. The exemption decreases by 12.5% every year for seven years. The program should be complemented by a public outreach effort to make property owners aware of what types of improvements may result in an increase in assessed valuation.

Implementation Steps:

- Adopt 421(f) tax incentive program.
- Conduct public outreach to make property owners aware of what types of improvements may result in an increase in assessed valuation and how this program will aid them in improving their property without raising their taxes.

Timeframe: Short-term

Estimated Cost: \$5,000 for brochure and mailing

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Planning and Community Revitalization Department
- City Council
- City Attorney
- City of Watervliet Assessor's Office

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget

Action 2.3 Continue homeownership and maximize rate of homeownership

The City of Watervliet should develop and expand programs and incentives for homeownership, partner with the local employers and consider adjusting permitted densities to reduce rental vacancies and stimulate homeownership. Increasing the current homeowner base in the City is crucial. The City should continue to support and seek to expand homeownership programs available to City residents and others interested in purchasing homes in Watervliet. Watervliet should also promote a high level of accountable ownership of investment property as critical to the stabilization of neighborhoods. The City should work to maximize the rate of homeownership by establishing an owner-occupied housing rehabilitation loan fund and provide direct assistance to qualified homebuyers. The City should also evaluate creating a local “new homebuyer” tax incentive. City staff should consult local major employers about their interest and ability to offer financial and other support for employees to purchase and rehabilitate a home near their workplace.

In February 2010, the City initiated a first time home buyer program which is expected to assist about 30 people to buy homes in the City. Based on the program’s initial success, the City should continue the home buyer program by pursuing available grant funding for future years.

Implementation Steps:

- Prepare grant applications and secure funding for rehabilitation and homeownership programs.
- Work with local banks to market homeownership opportunities within the City.
- Meet with major employers to determine their interest and ability to offer financial support to employees for homeownership.
- Upon funding award, market the program to potential applicants.

Timeframe: Short- to medium-term/long-term

Estimated Cost: \$750,000 to implement program and municipal staff time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- Arsenal Business & Technology Partnership
- Watervliet Business Council
- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- Local banks
- Watervliet Housing Authority

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYS OCR Small Cities-Community Development Block Grants
- NYS DHCR HOME Program
- Federal Home Loan Banks' Affordable Housing Program
- Affordable Housing Partnership Affordable Home Ownership Development Program and Community Investment Program

Goal 3: Foster a business group to identify and develop economic initiatives that support the social fabric of the community, enhance the City’s commercial districts, provide strong employment opportunities and meet resident needs for goods and services.

Action 3.1 Redevelop key vacant and underutilized buildings and sites

Vacant and underutilized buildings and sites, particularly in a built-out city like Watervliet, present an ideal opportunity for redevelopment.

Implementation Steps:

- Complete identification and inventory of all vacant and underutilized sites in Watervliet.
- An analysis of each building should be completed by the City Building Department and Department of Planning and Community Revitalization.
- Determine potential end-users and redevelopment alternatives for each site.
- For each building and end-use scenario, evaluate the potential for growth, factors necessary for success, opportunities/constraints, and marketing strategies to implement redevelopment alternatives.
- When confronted with the prospect of repurposing a large structure in the City, the preferred hierarchy of use/reuse should be:
 - reuse with or without renovation
 - renovation
 - removal and replacement
- Prioritize list of buildings/redevelopment strategies.
- Identify funding sources and developers for sites if end users need assistance.
- Secure funding.

Timeframe: Medium to long term for implementation but planning activities should start short term (first year).

Estimated Cost: \$25,000 for planning activities; redevelopment projects would be identified through the planning process but industrial redevelopment projects would range from \$500,000 to \$1,500,000.

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- Albany County
- Vacant building owners

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYS Empire State Development Corporation
- NYS OCR's Small Cities Program
- NYS DHCR
- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act or successor

Action 3.2 Develop a small business program

There are many small new businesses in Watervliet. New businesses are always fragile. Many communities revitalize their "downtowns" by developing a Business Assistance Program which provides incentives, technical assistance and access to capital to foster business start-up, expansion and relocation and enhance the overall appearance of commercial areas. The City of Watervliet could reap significant economic, physical and social benefits from a Business Assistance Program, particularly if it were targeted to the 19th Street Corridor, Route 32 Corridor, and along Broadway.

The program would also be important in supporting the Arsenal Business and Technology Partnership in attracting new businesses to the Watervliet Arsenal.

Implementation Steps:

- Evaluate existing programs for Small Business Assistance in the area to determine the types of services and financing each offer.
- Undertake a targeted and in-depth Business Assistance Survey to determine more accurately the specific needs of local small businesses, identify whether existing programs can meet that need (and link that business to the appropriate program) and, if not, what type of business assistance is lacking.
- Based on this analysis, develop a customized Business Assistance Program whose target is to assist existing or start-up businesses located in the City.
- A lead entity should be selected or created to manage the program. The existing Watervliet Business Council might serve well in this capacity. Possible components of such a program could include the provision of technical assistance, an entrepreneur's forum, and access to low interest loans and/or grants.
- The City of Watervliet should then identify appropriate sources of funding and prepare funding applications for assistance.

Timeframe: Short – to Medium-Term

Estimated Cost: \$25,000 for planning and development; \$400,000 to implement a Business Assistance Program.

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet
- Watervliet Business Council
- Watervliet Arsenal Business and Technology Partnership
- City of Watervliet Local Development Corporation
- Albany County
- Albany Colonie Chamber of Commerce

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYS OCR Community Development Block Grant Program
- NYS Main Street Program
- Center for Economic Growth

Action 3.3 Implement Downtown Marketing Program

Revitalization efforts for Watervliet should also focus on marketing the City, its character and potential. From a brokering perspective, the issue should not be that any one property is for sale or is vacant and why it is a “good deal,” but should be expanded to urge that Watervliet generally is a “good deal.” To further facilitate tenant and targeted business acquisitions, a marketing and retail recruitment package for the downtown is required. This package should incorporate multiple available properties into a single listing portfolio and include information on incentive programs, financial and building packages, and other incentives. These unified marketing efforts expand beyond commercial properties and vacant buildings to include all activities downtown which impact economic development, consumer activity, residential attractiveness and overall quality of

life. For purposes of this effort “Downtown” is identified as the Route 32 and Route 2 corridors in the City.

Implementation Steps:

- Develop Downtown Marketing Strategy.
- Identify vacant storefronts for retail businesses.
- Determine potential retail mix (what’s missing, what’s needed to complement existing retail uses).
- Develop retail recruitment package.
- Secure Financing for marketing strategy.

Timeframe: Short – to Medium-Term

Estimated Cost: \$15,000

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- City of Watervliet Local Development Corporation
- Watervliet Business Council
- Existing retail businesses
- Albany Colonie Chamber of Commerce

Potential Funding Sources:

- Local banks
- Chamber of Commerce
- NYS Empire State Development
- Municipal Budget

Action 3.4 Defining a “recognizable” area as the Central Business District (CBD)

The City of Watervliet lacks a defined downtown area in the typical sense. The City has several commercial corridors that, while providing some needed services, do not necessarily relate to one another very well.

Implementation Steps:

- Meet with stakeholders on defining the City’s core “downtown area” to determine an appropriate draft boundary or boundaries. Identify improvements that can be made to enhance the image and cohesiveness of a central or multiple downtowns.
- Plan and facilitate community workshops with residents/businesses on devising the downtown boundaries and the improvements needed.
- Work with an architect/landscape architect to identify design elements that could define and enhance the Central Business Districts in Watervliet.
- Secure funding for design implementation.

Timeframe: Short– long term

Estimated Cost: \$25,000 and municipal staff time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- City of Watervliet Local Development Corporation
- Watervliet Business Council
- Existing retail businesses
- Residents
- Albany Colonie Chamber of Commerce
- Albany County
- Center for Economic Growth

Potential Funding Sources

- Municipal Budget
- NYS OCR Technical Assistance
- Albany Colonie Chamber of Commerce

Action 3.5 Identify area(s) suitable for major redevelopment effort in the City

Since the City is almost entirely built out, the City should identify potential redevelopment sites including sites that offer opportunities for selective demolition and redevelopment. During the summer of 2009, the City began an inventory of all buildings in the City. The City should complete this inventory. Utilizing this baseline information, the City could prepare a comprehensive data base of all appropriate development parcels in the City. The City could also work with other economic development partners to develop a funding strategy for acquisition and redevelopment of land bank parcels.

Implementation Steps:

- Complete building inventory.
- Identify parcels for potential redevelopment.
- Implement zoning changes to require developers to construct new buildings close to the street and have parking in the back.
- Develop a funding strategy for acquisition and redevelopment of selected parcels.

Timeframe: Short- to Medium-Term

Estimated Cost: \$25,000 (feasibility study)

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- Arsenal Business & Technology Partnership
- NYS Empire State Development
- Albany County
- Local Businesses
- Local Realtors

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYS OCR – CDBG
- Empire Zone tax incentives
- Empire State Development
- Private Investment

Action 3.6 Create a redevelopment strategy

In addition to identifying areas suitable for major redevelopment, the City should create a strategy for redevelopment that could include expanding its inventory of developable land by acquiring property, holding property taken for taxes, selectively demolishing blighting buildings, relocating incompatible uses, and creating incentive packages for prime sites, if the site is viable as part of an overall development scheme.

The City should provide a development framework that is simple, predictable, fair and cost effective for developers. The City should offer “one stop shopping” with a streamlined and understandable flowchart describing the City development process, and an updated inventory of developable property. The City should also secure funding to facilitate strategic clearance of blighted property to return such property to the tax rolls.

Implementation Steps:

- Meet with stakeholders to create a redevelopment strategy.
- Complete a City Redevelopment Strategy to outline specific recommendations and cost estimates for redevelopment activities, property acquisition, and other essential redevelopment elements.
- Encourage developers to construct new buildings close to the street and have parking in the back.

Timeframe: Short- Term

Estimated Cost: \$25,000 and municipal staff time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- City of Watervliet Local Development Corporation
- Arsenal Business & Technology Partnership
- Albany County
- Local Businesses
- Local Realtors

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYS OCR – CDBG
- Empire Zone tax incentives
- Private Investment
- Municipal budget

Action 3.7 Consider a shared development strategy with the Town of Colonie

The City should explore with the Town of Colonie the possibility for a shared development strategy on the borders between the two municipalities. Development of split parcels or parcels that might be assembled into larger packages will be discouraged if the project sponsors are required to go through inconsistent development approval processes in the two municipalities.

Implementation Steps:

- Meet with the Town of Colonie to discuss this potential strategy.

- Draft shared development strategy.
- Consider grant funding for development and implementation of shared development strategies.
- The City should establish a review process for all planning and developments in communities that surround it to ensure that any proposed activities will not have detrimental impacts on the City, its infrastructure or its residents.
- Meet with the Town of Colonie, Village/Town of Green Island, and Village of Menands to discuss potential for shared approval processes.
- Create a policy that establishes point of contact and process for proper administration of shared approval processes.

Timeframe: Medium to Long term

Estimated Cost: Municipal Staff time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- Town of Colonie Planning and Economic Department

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budgets
- NYS Department of State shared services initiatives

Goal 4: Offer high-quality recreation amenities

Action 4.1 Finish connections to the Hudson Mohawk Trail

The Mohawk-Hudson Bikeway is a Bike-Hike Trail connecting Albany and Schenectady and is part of the statewide Canalway Trail that follows the Erie Canal from Buffalo to Albany. In July 2003 the Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail Crossroads Connections Study was completed. The Mohawk Hudson Study proposed development of an additional trail segment to be located in the City of Watervliet. The development included a 7,500-foot shoreline connection between the trail end at Fourth Street and the self-contained trail in Hudson Shores Park that terminates at 15th Street. The trail would require cutting into the I-787 embankment, and sensitive trail design would be needed to protect against disturbance of the shoreline and local aquatic habitats.

Subsequent analysis of the proposed bikeway indicated that a preferred alternative due to construction expense would be placing the bikeway on the city side of I-787. Such an analysis reduced the construction cost of the bikeway improvement from almost \$6 million to approximately \$2 million. This improvement is proposed for the Transportation Improvement Program of the Capital Region Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Capital District Transportation Committee. Any bike path improvements made should not limit or adversely impact future plans to lessen the noise impact from I-787.

Implementation Steps:

- Secure funding for the bike-hike trail.
- Construct trail.

Timeframe: Short to medium term

Estimated Cost: \$262,500 planning and \$2,000,000 construction

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet
- Friends of the Mohawk-Hudson Hike Bike Trail
- NYS Department of Transportation
- Capital District Transportation Committee
- Capital District Regional Planning Committee

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYS DOT TIP
- NYS EPF
- NYS LWRP
- Municipal Budget

Action 4.2 Promote City Programs and Events and Support New Community Events

The City has been very successful in the recent past in hosting community events that have drawn current and former Watervliet residents. Part of this success resulted from the participation of civic and cultural organizations and schools in the various community events. With the closing of a number of churches and schools, many popular events have been discontinued. As an example, the bazaars are gone that used to annually bring neighborhood residents together. There was a Fourth of July celebration in Hudson Shores Park. More events like this are needed to bring everyone together. A start has been made with the expanded Arsenal City Run, the expanded Memorial Day parade with Watervliet Arsenal participation and the Quadricentennial Celebration in Hudson Shores Park (being repeated in June 2010 with the expectation this will become an annual event), and the expanded Christmas Season Holiday event at Veteran's Park.

Information should be distributed to residents about upcoming events, particularly to new residents to the City; posting notices on the City website and the public access channel and brochures that can be distributed through the schools, churches, supermarket, Watervliet Arsenal and other major employers.

Implementation Steps:

- Contact local community groups that might partner with the City in hosting community events.
- Determine discontinued or new events the City wants to promote.
- Identify potential sponsors for the identified events (vendors, donations, sponsors).
- Meet with all service providers in the City who sponsor programs and events.
- Determine if there is duplication of efforts and where coordination could be increased.
- Develop a promotional campaign to increase awareness of existing programs and events in the City.
- Publicize the various events on a common community calendar on-line and in paper.

Timeframe: Short -to medium- to long- term

Estimated Cost: \$10,000 per annum

Stakeholders/Partners:

- Watervliet Arsenal
- Local not-for-profit community organizations
- City of Watervliet Parks and Recreation Department
- City of Watervliet Mayor's Office
- Watervliet Housing Authority

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget
- Watervliet Arsenal
- Private donations
- NYS OPRHP EPF
- Riverspark
- NYS Department of State

Action 4.3 Continue to improve use of Hudson Shores Park

Hudson Shores Park is a 9 acre park located along the Hudson River adjacent to I-787 between 16th Street and 23rd Street that currently provides a river walk and fishing and picnicking opportunities, a solar pavilion intended to house shells for college and local crew teams, restrooms, a picnic pavilion, a barge restaurant, and the relocated seasonal Farmers Market. The final planned construction projects in the Park include reconstruction of the historic glasshouse donated by the Watervliet Arsenal, construction of additional parking, and improvement of a walking trail in the Park.

Implementation Steps:

- Prepare a plan for the glasshouse including funding strategy.
- Identify ways to improve access to the Park.
- Identify additional amenities to the Park, if any.
- Identify additional events for the Park.
- Secure funding for the glasshouse, parking lot and walking trail.

Timeframe: Medium to Long term

Estimated Cost: \$25,000 (for conceptual plans) and municipal staff time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Parks and Recreation Department
- NYS Department of State

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYS Department of State
- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Action 4.4 Create a series of walking trails in the City neighborhoods

At the Action Planning Workshop one resident suggested developing a series of walking trails in the City. This recommendation received positive response from other attendees. The development of walking trails could encourage residents to explore their own neighborhood or another

neighborhood in the City as well as link the trails to various recreational and community amenities such as the Hudson Shores Park and the Hudson Mohawk Trail.

Implementation Steps:

- Appoint a select committee of interested residents to study the issue and make recommendations for developing new walking (and biking) trails in the City.
- Identify potential new walking trails through City neighborhoods.
- Determine a strategy, priorities and timeline for implementing the recommended new trails.
- Plan for signage and publicity literature to publicize the trails.
- Consider a program to reintroduce historic street names and neighborhood identifications into the City.
- Create an historic signs program for buildings in the City, administered either by the City Building Department or the Watervliet Historical Society.
- Identify appropriate funding sources and apply for assistance.

Timeframe: Medium to Long term

Estimated Cost: \$35,000

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Parks and Recreation Department
- Watervliet Historical Society

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYS Department of State
- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic
- Municipal Budget

Action 4.5 Develop bicycle friendly information to supplement walking efforts

Brochures and maps for self-guided tours will enable visitors to learn about Watervliet's trails as well as local points-of-interest, including historic structures, restaurants and stores. The brochures and maps should be made available at City Hall, the Public Library, the Watervliet Housing Authority, seasonal Farmers Market, through local merchants, on the City's web site and at community events. Development of interpretive signage should also be considered and installed at the following locations:

- Along the Hudson-Mohawk Trail
- At the entrance to Hudson Shores Park
- At the City's gateways
- At City Hall
- At key historic structures

Implementation Steps:

- Draft and print brochure.
- Determine the type of interpretative signage to be displayed.
- Secure financing for signage.
- Purchase signage and install.

Timeframe: Medium Term

Estimated Cost: \$20,000

Stakeholders/Partners:

- Department of Parks and Recreation
- Watervliet Historical Society
- Watervliet Housing Authority
- Watervliet Business Council

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal budget
- Private foundations
- Local businesses

Action 4.6 Maintain and Improve City Parks

The City of Watervliet is home to several parks and playgrounds, a pool and other recreational facilities. Continued maintenance of these facilities will allow City residents the opportunity to enjoy the City's park and recreational areas.

Implementation Steps:

- Identify rehabilitation needs for each of the City's park and recreational areas.
- Prioritize projects.
- Develop a capital improvement plan for recreation projects.
- Identify other potential funding sources to augment city funds.
- Consider creation of an "Adopt a Park or Playground" program for City individuals and organizations.

Timeframe: Short-term (identify improvements)
 Medium-term (secure funding to implement improvements)

Estimated Cost: Municipal Staff time to identify improvements and to prepare grant applications.

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Department of Parks and Recreation
- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- City organizations

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYS OPRHP Environmental Protection Fund
- NYS DOS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
- Municipal Budget

Goal 5: Maintain and upgrade the City's infrastructure

Action 5.1 Plan to separate storm and sanitary sewers eliminating Combined Sewers

The City's sewer system is comprised of storm, sanitary, and combined sewers. In combined sewers storm and sanitary flows are normally directed to the Albany County Sewage Plant for treatment. During heavy rain events a portion of the non-treated waters overflow into the Hudson River. The City since 2003 has been working with other communities in Albany County, other institutions and entities in Albany County, and NYS DEC to study the existing conditions and impacts of these flows to achieve a long term control plan, (LTCP) to improve existing combined stormwater overflow conditions. The LTCP will include recommendations and a project schedule that will made part of the City's SPDES permit.

The plan may not require the City to eliminate all combined sewers at this time. However, EPA's goal is over time to attain this objective. The plan will include improvements to the Albany County Sewer Plant including disinfection and possibly increased capacity and additional storage, as well as inclusion of modifications to the City's CSO system. All these actions will have a financial impact on the City's rate payers.

Additionally the City's overall sewer system is primarily clay tile, typically 8 and 9 inches in diameter. The system was installed around 100 years ago. This type of pipe allows for blockages from tree roots, leaking at joints, has limited capacity and is cracking due to age.

In all infrastructure projects the City should make effort to eliminate combined sewers and replace undersized and defective sewer pipes.

Implementation Steps:

- Aggressively negotiate with the LTCP engineering team, DEC, EPA, and the other communities for the most beneficial and practical approach to address the city's overflows and implementation of an agreeable schedule.
- Secure from the Engineering team for the LTCP all suggested background data and documentation for possible actions to address the CSO issue.
- Incorporate into the planning for future roadway and water projects sewer separation activities that will achieve the ultimate goal of CSO elimination.
- Conduct and inflow and infiltration study to ascertain existing conditions and allow for a plan of action to address needed improvements.
- Create a plan of action to address both the LTCP and needed sewer improvements.
- Evaluate the financial impact on sewer rates of the improvements required by the LTCP and adjust accordingly.

Timeframe: Medium to Long term

Estimated Cost: \$10M

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet
- MS4/CSO Coalition

Potential Funding Sources:

- City of Watervliet CIP
- NYS Clean Air/Clean Water Act
- NYS Environmental Protection Fund

Action 5.2 Plan to retain more of the rainwater in the City on City properties

There are a variety of techniques available to retain more of the rainfall the City receives on properties in the City, without discharge into the City's storm or sanitary sewers. These techniques include green roofs, rain gardens, rain barrels, permeable pavement, and other strategies. As properties are redeveloped, such low cost techniques for retaining water on site and directly recharging to the groundwater should be considered.

Implementation Steps:

- Continue the City's participation as a partner in the Albany County stormwater management coalition.
- Consider incentives that would encourage more property owners to voluntarily improve the on-site stormwater capacity of their properties.
- Establish a working group to assist the City in implementing such a water retention program.
- Consider modifications to the Building Code and Zoning Ordinance to encourage more on-site water retention when development or redevelopment efforts are undertaken on properties in the City.
- Require new developments to have zero net discharge and require such properties adhere to the 100 year flood plain principal. Developments should contain rainwater on property through a variety of alternatives including tank systems and green roofs. The State Building Code has regulations on building run-off which the City should follow.

Timeframe: Short to Medium Term

Estimated Cost: \$15,000

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Department of Water
- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- City of Watervliet Building Department
- Albany County Stormwater Coalition
- NYS DEC
- NYS Department of State
- NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation
- US EPA

Action 5.3 Consider development of a citywide energy savings program

In an effort to become more energy efficient and reduce the effects of greenhouse gases and vehicle emissions, the City should investigate ways to achieve greater energy efficiency in municipal buildings, services, and programs.

The City has joined a variety of sustainable cities initiatives, including the Climate Registry. As part of the effort to become a more green community, major energy improvements to the built environment could produce significant energy savings as well as improve the livability and quality of the aging residential and commercial structures in the City. Only energy improvements that would “pay back” in an appropriate time frame should realistically be pursued.

The green building movement and the historic preservation movement, once seen as almost working at cross-purposes with each other, are increasingly joining forces and calling attention to the win-win of historic rehabilitation that is also green and energy efficient. There is a common misperception that older buildings are less energy efficient than buildings built in more recent times. Data from the US Energy Information Administration indicates that buildings built before 1920 are approximately equivalent to buildings built from 2000 to 2003, and the worst energy offenders are actually those built in the 1970s and 1980s, relatively few buildings in Watervliet. Historic buildings in the City provide the dual benefit of energy-efficient buildings in energy-efficient locations.

Implementation Steps:

- Appoint a working group to explore the ways in which the City might join the ranks of other communities who have retrofitted their buildings for increased energy efficiency and affordability.
- Consider implementation of a citywide energy retrofit effort.
- Identify potential partners in an energy retrofit for the entire City.
- Determine the retrofit strategy for each class of structure in the City.
- Identify appropriate funding sources for implementation and apply for funding assistance.
- Appoint a select committee of interested residents, city staff and other professionals to study the issue and make recommendations for developing ideas for energy savings in the City.
- Identify potential programs that would create energy savings for the City.
- Determine a strategy, priorities and timeline for implementing the recommended programs.
- Identify appropriate funding sources for implementation and apply for funding assistance.

Timeframe: Short to Medium term

Estimated Cost: Planning: \$50,000, Implementation: Up to \$2 million and municipal staff time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet
- Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- NYSERDA
- National Grid
- NYS Power Authority
- Albany County weatherization
- Local residents
- Local businesses

Goal 6: Preserve and promote Watervliet's community character and the City's rich cultural and historic resources

Action 6.1 Redevelop vacant buildings that have significant cultural or historic significance to the city

The City's primary capital asset is its built environment. The City's hierarchy of protection for its historic built resources should be:

- Redevelop vacant structures and get them back on the tax roles
- Adaptation of the exteriors of existing vacant buildings to appropriate new uses that respect the existing built fabric of the structures and the City's built environment generally.
- Sensitive modification of existing buildings to accommodate new uses that are needed in Watervliet.

The City has a growing inventory of vacant churches, factories and schools. These buildings present both a challenge and an opportunity for adaptive reuse. Historic preservation grants may be one resource to help redevelop these buildings and place these properties back on the municipal tax rolls. Numerous other economic development resources are available to adaptively reuse these vacant buildings as well.

Implementation Steps:

- Use the results of the initial implementation steps in Action 3.1 to determine the vacant buildings most likely to benefit from historic preservation resources and/or other economic development financial resources.
- Discuss priority projects with NYS SHPO and determine historic preservation resources available for each identified project if feasible.
- Where there are multiple buildings in a complex that need to be repurposed and the existing use is not consistent with the existing zoning, set a City policy of approaching the property owner to work collaboratively with the City and the owner's real estate representatives to market the complex as a unit if feasible to be considered for appropriate rezoning and/or special permitting rather than separating structures to individual owners.
- Prepare general information brochures about each building and the potential financial resources available to assist redevelopment.
- Consider marketing these projects through the City of Watervliet Local Development Corporation or other resources.

Timeframe: Planning and Design - Short-term and Redevelopment - Medium to Long term

Estimated Cost: \$75,000 for planning and design and as much as \$4.0M for redevelopment of one key structure

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet
- City of Watervliet Local Development Corporation
- NYS SHPO
- Albany County
- Vacant building owners

Potential Funding Sources:

- Historic Preservation Tax Credits
- NYS Empire State Development Corporation
- NYS OCR Small Cities CDBG Program
- NYS DHCR Main Street Program
- National Trust for Historic Preservation

Action 6.2 Identify historic resources in the City for possible inclusion in local and/or state and federal historic districts

The City of Watervliet is interested in exploring the possibility of nominating buildings and/or districts to the National and State Registers of Historic Places. The National Historic Preservation Act and New York State Historic Preservation Act establish criteria by which buildings, sites, and structures are determined historic. In order to be designated historic and listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places, buildings, structures, sites and neighborhoods are evaluated through a formal survey and nomination process based on established criteria. Listed resources are afforded a basic level of protection from federal and state actions, but local regulation is needed to prevent demolition and other actions.

If such National and State register designations are not feasible, the City could explore the possibility of creating local historic districts with the goal of preserving the quality built environment and encouraging property owners to respect and restore the historic fabric of Watervliet.

Implementation Steps:

- Use list of potential historic sites/districts identified in the City's LWRP as a starting point.
- Discuss with NYS SHPO the potential to establish districts encompassing some or all of these sites and determine the implementation steps required for achieving site and/or district designation.
- Explore the feasibility of creating local historic districts and determine the benefits of such designation, including possible tax incentives for compliance with district standards.

Timeframe: Medium to Long term

Estimated Cost: \$15,000

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet
- NYS SHPO
- Preservation League of New York State
- Hudson Valley Greenways Council
- NYS Department of State
- National Trust for Historic Preservation

Potential Funding Sources:

- City of Watervliet
- NYS SHPO
- NYS DHCR
- NYS Department of State

Goal 7: Upgrade and maintain the City's Transportation System

Action 7.1 Implement Route 32 Corridor Study

The City of Watervliet is currently participating with the Village of Menands and the Town of Colonie on the Route 32 Linkage Corridor Study. The Route 32 Corridor includes Broadway in the Village of Menands and Town of Colonie and Third Avenue from First Street to the intersection of Broadway and Third Avenue at Ninth Street in the City of Watervliet.

This redevelopment plan will evaluate the bicycle and pedestrian environment to ensure safe crossings and facilities that support transit; develop transportation concepts that would provide for more efficient movement of automobile traffic through the narrow cross section of Route 32 in Watervliet; develop access management strategies for adjacent land uses; develop strategies to increase commuter patronage to businesses in the corridor; support Main Street style redevelopment of the corridor for mixed workforce housing and businesses; and assess the Department of the Army's proposed reconfiguration of the South Gate to the Arsenal to ensure commuter and local traffic access through the Route 32/Broadway intersection is maintained. One element of the redevelopment plan will be to assure that to the extent feasible any modifications of streets adhere to the Complete Streets philosophy, with room in and on the street and associated ways for all persons and all forms of transportation.

Implementation Steps:

- Prioritize recommendations for the Linkage Study.
- Implement recommendations of the Route 32 Study (anticipated to be completed in 2010).
- Secure funding for implementation projects.

Timeframe: Planning – Short-term and Implementation - Medium to Long term

Estimated Cost: \$5,000 for planning activities

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet
- Town of Colonie
- Village of Menands
- NYS DOT
- Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC)
- Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA)

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget
- NYS DOT
- Capital District Transportation Committee Transportation Improvement Program

Action 7.2 Study rerouting I-787 for better livability for the City

Interstate 787 runs along the eastern side of the City and presents a barrier between the City and the Hudson River. The City should evaluate/identify ways to improve access to the waterfront. A number of municipalities across the county have rerouted roadways away from waterfront areas.

Other ideas to consider include decking over the highway and pedestrian bridges, or burying such highways.

Implementation Steps:

- Contact communities that have successfully moved roadways away from waterfront areas or otherwise have mitigated the adverse effects of major highways on the community.
- Initiate with the CDTA a request to fund the study
- Secure funding to study such actions by Watervliet and/or the other Albany County communities along the I-787 section abutting the Hudson River.
- Develop a RFP outlining study objectives and deliverables.
- Issue RFP, review proposals and select consultant.
- Prepare Study.

Timeframe: Short to Medium-Term

Estimated Cost: \$80,000

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Planning and Community Revitalization Department
- NYS DOT
- Capital District Transportation Committee
- Capital District Regional Planning Committee
- Town of Colonie
- City of Cohoes
- Village of Menands
- City of Albany
- Albany County

Potential Funding Sources:

- Capital District Transportation Committee
- NYS Department of Transportation
- Municipal Budget
- Member Items

Action 7.3 Advocate state payments for loss of I-787 taxable property

The City of Albany has received compensation from the State of New York for the loss of property due to Interstate 787. Similarly, the City of Watervliet has lost taxable property and should explore advocating for some compensation from NYS for this loss. The City should also seek taxes from the Watervliet Arsenal as they further privatize portions of their land.

Implementation Steps:

- Contact the City of Albany for advice.
- Meet with stakeholders to determine a course of action.

Timeframe: Short-to Medium Term

Estimated Cost: Municipal Staff Time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Planning and Community Revitalization Department
- City of Watervliet Mayor's Office
- Assemblyman Ron Canestrari
- Senator Neil Breslin
- Congressman Paul Tonko

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget

Action 7.4 Mitigate noise along I-787

During the planning process, concerns were raised about noise generated by I-787, suggesting that the City should look to mitigation either by constructing sound walls or other buffering measures to reduce the level of traffic noise along the interstate. The City should request that the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) measure the noise levels at several locations. As appropriate, NYSDOT could then work together to develop a sound barrier system.

One alternative to noise mitigation would be to request that NYS Department of Transportation reduce the speed limit along I-787. The posted state speed limit on the portion of Interstate 787 that passes through the City of Watervliet is 55 mph. The actual average speed is significantly higher. Implementation of this activity should avoid conflict with the proposed bike path.

Implementation Steps:

- Meet with NYSDOT for initial discussions.
- Evaluate the alternatives and costs of various noise barriers.
- Request that NYS reduce the speed limit on I-787.

Timeframe: Short to Medium Term

Estimated Cost: \$35,000 to evaluate the issue and municipal staff time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- NYS DOT
- City of Watervliet Planning and Community Revitalization Department
- City of Watervliet Mayor's office
- Assemblyman Ron Canestrari
- Senator Neil Breslin

Potential Funding Sources:

- NYSDOT
- Municipal Budget

Action 7.5 Study the use of City Alleyways

Parking is perceived to be a problem, particularly in certain areas of the City of Watervliet. With most of the City built-out and the prevalence of two-car families, parking can be an issue. The City does have alleys that could be utilized for some parking. The City should study and evaluate the use of some alleyways for parking.

Implementation Steps:

- Identify alleyways in the City.
- For each alleyway, identify opportunities and constraints for allowing parking.
- Meet with property owners and tenants in the neighborhoods surrounding the alleys.

Timeframe: Short- to Medium-Term

Estimated Costs: Municipal Staff-time

Stakeholders/Partners:

- Planning and Community Revitalization Department
- Mayor's Office
- Department of Public Works
- Police Department
- Fire Department
- Refuse and Recycling Department

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget

Goal 8: Improve land management by updating the City's Zoning Ordinance

Action 8.1 Incorporate amendments on Zoning Map

The City's Official Zoning Map does not include the Waterfront Recreation District (WRD), Waterfront Open Space District (WOSD), or Waterfront Business District (WBD). The City of Watervliet adopted a Waterfront Consistency Review Law (Local Law #2 of 2005) as part of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) adopted in 2005.

Implementation Steps:

- Draft a new official zoning map that includes all the zoning districts in the City as presently configured.
- Present the map to the Planning Board and City Council.
- Hold public hearing.
- Conduct SEQOR compliance and coordinated review.
- Adopt map.

Timeframe: Short –Term – Initiate in first year of Comprehensive Plan implementation

Estimated Cost: \$5,000

Stakeholders/Partners:

- Planning Board
- Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- City Council
- Albany County Planning Board
- Town of Colonie

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget
- NYS DHCR OSC Planning grant
- NYSDOT

Action 8.2 Adopt design standards for buildings, landscaping, screening, and lighting

Protect neighborhoods and ensure quality design of new infill nonresidential development by establishing design standards for building design, landscaping, screening, lighting and pedestrian access. Establish additional standards for specific uses as needed.

Implementation Steps:

- Draft design standards for buildings, landscaping, screening and lighting.
- Present design standards to City Council and Planning Board.
- Hold public hearing.
- Perform SEQR (State Environmental Quality Review).
- Adopt design standards.

Timeframe: Short – to medium-term

Estimated Cost: \$15,000

Stakeholders/Partners:

- Planning Board
- Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- City Council
- Albany County Planning Board
- Town of Colonie

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget
- NYS DHCR OSC – Technical Assistance

Action 8.3 Develop a commercial overlay zone for 19th Street east of 12th Avenue and Route 32 generally

19th Street is a major commercial corridor within the City of Watervliet. The City would like to create a commercial overlay zone for 19th Street east of 12th Avenue and for the entirety of Route 32.

Implementation Steps:

- Work with Planning Department and Building Department officials and other planning professionals to create an overlay district or districts.
- Draft appropriate zoning language.
- Present amendments to the City Council and Planning Board.
- Hold public hearing.
- Perform SEQR (State Environmental Quality Review).
- Adopt overlay district.

Timeframe: Short-term

Estimated Cost: Municipal Staff Time/Consultant

Stakeholders/Partners:

- Planning Board
- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- City Council

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget
- NYS OSC – Technical Assistance

Action 8.4 Review and update parking standards

One of the main goals of the City is to fill every home in Watervliet with good homeowners and tenants for the second and third units. However, if every dwelling unit was occupied, there would be a parking problem as most homes in the City are built on small lots. Additionally, many businesses also perceive there is a parking problem in the City. The City should review and update its parking standards, including encouraging parking in alleyways.

Implementation Steps:

- Work with stakeholders to discuss the parking issues and identify improved standards.
- Identify ways in which existing and proposed mass transportation options will alleviate the necessity for multiple cars for each dwelling unit.
- Draft appropriate zoning language.
- Present amendments to City Council, with an advisory review by the Planning Board.
- Hold public hearing.
- Perform SEQR (State Environmental Quality Review).
- Adopt amendments.

Timeframe: Short-term

Estimated Cost: Municipal Staff Time/Consultant

Stakeholders/Partners:

- Planning Board
- City of Watervliet Department of Planning and Community Revitalization
- City Council

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget
- NYS OSC – Technical Assistance

Action 8.5 Update the City's Sign Law

Signage says volumes about a community. The current cacophony of signage new and old in the City of Watervliet does not clearly communicate a unified vision of the City. A major new sign ordinance should be drafted immediately.

Implementation Steps:

- Create a working group with membership from the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Building Department, staffed by the Department of Planning and Community Revitalization and Corporation Counsel's office to review sign laws in other communities for appropriate models and consider phasing out billboards.
- Draft a revised sign ordinance.
- Present amendments to City Council.
- Perform SEQR (State Environmental Quality Review).
- Hold public hearing.
- Adopt comprehensive sign law.

Action 8.6 Encourage the reconversion of multi-family structures with rental units back to home owner-occupied single and two-family homes

During the planning process, residents and City staff expressed concern about the impacts of the conversion of one and two family dwellings to multi-unit structures. Some issues raised included rapid turnover of tenants, noise, poor property maintenance and inadequate parking for tenants. The City of Watervliet will consider revising its zoning and building codes governing housing conversions to include provisions for adequate off-street parking for multi-unit conversions and create enforcement provisions needed to discourage violations of the building and zoning code and the legal tools to effectively address those violations that do occur.

The City plans to review its current zoning districts and should consider expanding the R-1 zoning to further restrict where conversions can take place. In addition, the City should investigate the feasibility of financial incentives to encourage the conversion of apartments back into single-family dwellings. While New York State does not offer specific tax incentives for home conversions, the City could offer grants funded by other levels of government to cover part of the cost of converting a property from multi-family to single-family use. This would also support the City's goal of increasing homeownership.

Implementation Steps:

- Identify properties that have been subdivided.
- Poll property owners about occupancy and interest in reconversion.
- Develop a revolving loan fund/grant program for reconversions.

Timeframe: Short-Term

Estimated Cost: \$3,500

Stakeholders/Partners:

- City of Watervliet Planning and Community Revitalization Department
- City of Watervliet Code Enforcement Office
- Property Owners
- Tenants

Potential Funding Sources:

- Municipal Budget
- NYS OCR Small Cities CDBG program
- NYS DHCR HOME Program

Financial Impact Analysis

Implementation of the Action Plan projects delineated in the City of Watervliet Comprehensive Plan would utilize \$251,000 in City funds, \$5.0 million in public funding through federal and state sources and an estimated \$4.6 million in private investment. The total capital cost of projects evaluated in the Comprehensive Plan is approximately \$15.5 million. The financing strategy leverages a City commitment of \$251,000 with \$9.6 million in other funds, a 1:38.4 leverage ratio. In other words, every dollar the City spends on action plans will result in \$38.40 of additional investment in the City of Watervliet.

The attached spreadsheets outline the projected costs, recommended funding options, time schedule and potential economic impacts of implementing the 42 specific actions (projects) recommended in the City's Comprehensive Plan. There is a series of three spreadsheets for each group of action plans. Spreadsheet C-1 delineates the specific action plans, estimated cost, projected timeframe for implementation, and anticipated sources of funding (City, Federal, State, and Private). The Citywide Action Plans (C-1) are organized by the eight goals established for the Comprehensive Plan. A summary of the overall costs for all of the action plans is provided at the bottom of C-1.

Spreadsheet C-2 provides an analysis of the projected City funding suggested for each of the proposed action plans and a timeframe for when City funds would be needed. Spreadsheet C-3 provides a cursory analysis of the potential economic impacts of implementing the action plans. This is a fairly conservative analysis which mainly focuses on the potential increased property tax revenues likely to be derived from major new construction and redevelopment projects. However, the potential increase in sales tax revenue that might result from the commercial / retail activity planned has not been factored into this analysis. The analysis also does not evaluate the benefits of improved infrastructure, streetscapes, neighborhood parks, increased code enforcement, housing rehabilitation programs and similar initiatives that would clearly have the positive effect of stabilizing neighborhoods and enhancing property values.

The Action Plan schedule is delineated in three distinct phases: Short term for those projects that can be implemented in the first three years; Medium term for projects to be implemented in years 4 through 7; and Long term for projects expected to be implemented within the 8 to 10 year time frame of the Plan. Approximately 30 projects are currently characterized as short-term (years one through three) and 11 are medium-term (years four through seven). And one is a long term project (years eight through ten).

However, it should be noted that there is some overlap between the short, medium and long-term projects. Phasing categories indicate when a project begins, and some projects that begin in years 1-3 will still be active in the medium term and a number of projects that begin in years 4-7 will not yet be complete when the long-term projects begin implementation in year eight. For example, there will be 22 projects on-going during Phase 2 and 7 projects during Phase 3.

Phasing priorities were based on input from the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, project proponents, the local community (including residents and businesses) and the City of Watervliet, as well as on the consulting team's professional judgment. Ultimately development activity may vary from the proposed phases as some projects will mature more quickly and others may fade.

Short Term Actions

The Short term actions generally include projects considered a priority by most of the community and generally where implementation of the project is highly feasible. Typically the majority of these identified Short term projects have undergone some pre-planning and funding sources have already been identified and appear favorable. They also include a number of projects that can be implemented fairly quickly using City staff resources.

Total costs for Short term projects are estimated at about \$1.8 million, of which \$104,000 (not including City staff time) is projected to come from City funds. As presently outlined, the City would need to budget approximately \$35,000 annually during the first three years to implement these short term actions.

Ultimately, full implementation of the action plan projects will translate into an increase in annual tax revenues resulting from an expansion of the City's tax base. However, most of this expansion will come in Phases 2 and 3 (see spreadsheet C-3 and discussion below). Total new revenues projected from the implementation of Short term actions by the end of Year 3 are \$11,571.

Medium Term Actions

Medium term actions are proposed for years 4 through 7. Total costs for Medium term projects are estimated at about \$4.6 million, of which \$132,000 is projected to come from City funds. As presently outlined, the City would need to budget approximately \$33,000 annually for the four years of Phase 2 to implement the Medium term actions.

However, during this phase the City would begin to see an expansion of its tax base as some of the major development projects are implemented. **Without any increase in the City's tax rate**, annual tax revenues should increase on average by about \$36,287 per year during years 4 through 7 based on tax base expansion. These additional revenues would offset 100% of the projected City costs for medium term actions. Total tax base expansion in terms of tax revenues generated by the end of Year 7 is estimated at \$156,719.

Long Term Actions

Long term actions are proposed for years 8 through 10. Total costs for Long term projects are estimated at about \$3.5 million, of which \$15,000 is projected to come from City funds. As presently outlined, the City would need to budget an average of \$5,000 annually for the three years of Phase 3 to implement the Long term actions. During this phase the City would realize the full expansion of the City's tax base as projected with the completion of all action plan projects. **Without any increase in the City's tax rate**, annual tax revenues should increase by an average of \$68,717 per year during Years 8-10 based on tax base expansion. These additional revenues would offset all of the projected City costs for long term actions. Total tax base expansion in terms of tax revenues generated by the end of Year 10 is estimated at \$362,870.

Summary of Financial Impacts

It is our firm belief that many of the projects evaluated herein can be designed, constructed, and launched into operation within the 10-year window, effectively implementing the Comprehensive Plan, thereby enhancing the City of Watervliet with exciting, culturally rich, and economically sustainable development. The economic benefits resulting from plan implementation are diverse, and comprise a new and significant source of support for downtown businesses, job opportunities, neighborhood revitalization, and municipal tax revenues.

The financial impact analysis of the City of Watervliet Comprehensive Plan relied on two key measurements of economic impact - capital investment and property tax revenues. The analysis evaluates the cumulative impacts of these factors as the various action plan projects are implemented over a 10-year build-out period that encompasses the short, medium and long term projects described above.

Total expenditures at the conclusion of plan implementation are projected to be approximately \$9.9 million in investment, producing nearly \$363,000 in new tax revenues over the 10-year implementation period.

The fiscal impact estimates stated above are fairly conservative. We have considered only the impact of property tax revenues. In all likelihood, the figures significantly underestimate the true financial impacts of Comprehensive Plan implementation. The potential increase in sales tax revenue that might result from the planned commercial / retail activity has not been factored into this analysis. The impact analysis also does not evaluate the benefits of improved infrastructure, streetscapes, neighborhood parks, increased code enforcement, housing rehabilitation programs and similar initiatives that would clearly have the positive effect of stabilizing neighborhoods and enhancing property values. Nor does the analysis assess the positive benefits of the numerous jobs and increased consumer spending that would clearly result from the projects described in the Comprehensive Plan. Finally the analysis does not take into account the privatization of properties at the Watervliet Arsenal, the attraction of new businesses to the site and the eventual return of tax-exempt properties to the city tax rolls.

Reading the Spreadsheets

The Action Plans are classified according to goals and there is a series of three spreadsheets for each group of action plans. Spreadsheet C-1 delineates the specific action plans, estimated cost, projected timeframe for implementation, and anticipated sources of funding (City, Federal, State, and Private).

To understand the interrelationship of the three spreadsheets, consider as an example, the set of Action plan projects recommended under Goal 2 – Provide a number of high quality housing opportunities. The Comprehensive Plan proposes four action plans for this goal, with most of the projects being short term but continuing through the 10 year implementation period. Total project costs are estimated at \$2.0 million.

C-1

Watervliet Action Plans

	Annual \$	Years 1-3	Years 4-7	Years 8-10
Goal 2 – Provide a variety of high quality housing opportunities				
Identify areas for Housing Rehabilitation	\$25,000	\$25,000		
Implement Housing Rehabilitation Programs	\$405,000	\$405,000	\$405,000	\$405,000
Utilize NYS incentives for home reinvestment	\$5,000	\$5,000		
Continue Homeownership Program and Maximize rate of homeownership	\$750,000	\$400,000	\$350,000	
Goal 2 Totals		\$835,000	\$755,000	\$405,000

Spreadsheet C-1 delineates the specific action plans for each City goal, the estimated cost for each action plan, the phasing of expenditures for short, medium and long term for implementation, and anticipated sources of funding (City, Federal, State, and Private). A segment of C-1 for Goal 2 is depicted above.

The column marked Annual \$ generally refers to the total action plan costs. If there is an “A” marked in the column to the right, the cost figure is the annual cost of implementation for whatever period(s) are designated otherwise it is the total project cost.

One of the major projects for Goal 2 is implementation of an ongoing Housing Rehabilitation Program. Total project costs are estimated at \$1.2 million and the project is proposed to be carried out in each phase of plan implementation. Each phase’s costs are estimated at \$405,000. A fuller description of this project and all of the other action plans is provided in the narrative text of the City of Watervliet Comprehensive Plan.

C-1 also provides a projected source of funding (not shown in spreadsheet segment above) for each of the action plans. For the Housing Rehabilitation Program project, most of the funding is expected to come from NYS funding sources as delineated on spreadsheet C-1. A relatively small amount of project funding (\$20,000) is expected to come from the City.

Spreadsheet C-2 provides an analysis of the projected City funding suggested for each of the proposed action plans and a timeframe for when City funds would be needed.

C-2

Watervliet Action Plans

Goal 2 – Analysis of City Funding of Action Plans	Total cost	% City	Years 1-3	Years 4-7	Years 8-10
Identify areas for Housing Rehabilitation	\$25,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Implement Housing Rehabilitation Programs	\$1,215,000	1.2%	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Utilize NYS incentives for home reinvestment	\$5,000	100.0%	\$5,000	\$0	\$0
Continue Homeownership Program and maximize rate of homeownership	\$750,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Goal 2 Totals			\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000

As noted above, City funds in this project is relatively small - \$20,000 or about 1% of the project total of \$2 million. City funding of \$10,000 is projected for Years 1-3 and \$5,000 each for Years 4-7 and Years 8-10.

Spreadsheet C-3 provides a cursory analysis of the potential economic impacts of implementing the action plans. This a fairly conservative analysis which mainly focuses on the potential increased property tax revenues likely to be derived from major new construction and redevelopment projects. However, the potential increase in sales tax revenue that might result from the commercial / retail activity planned has not been factored into this analysis. The analysis also does not evaluate the benefits of improved infrastructure, streetscapes, neighborhood parks, increased code enforcement and similar initiatives that would clearly have the positive effect of stabilizing neighborhoods and enhancing property values.

C-3

Watervliet Action Plans

Goal 2 – Analysis of Economic Impacts	Total cost	Increased Assessment	Years 1-3	Years 4-7	Years 8-10
Identify areas for Housing Rehabilitation	\$25,000				
Implement Housing Rehabilitation Programs	\$1,215,000	\$756,338	\$3,857	\$7,715	\$11,572
Utilize NYS incentives for home reinvestment	\$5,000				
Continue Homeownership Program and maximize rate of homeownership	\$750,000				
Goal 2 Totals		\$756,338	\$3,857	\$7,715	\$11,572

For each action plan that is expected to generate future property taxes, a future assessed value at project completion is estimated at 62% of the total project cost. The 62% figure was selected because it is the City's current equalization rate. Annual tax projections for each of the action plans were based on the projected assessed value and a constant City tax rate of \$15.30 per \$1,000 assessed value. For multi-year projects, annual taxes are projected on a pro rated basis based on the percentage of project completion.

City of Watervliet Action Plans

Sources of Funding

C-1

Action Plan Projects

		Annual \$	A	Year 1-3	Year 4-7	Year 8-10	Total	City	Federal	NYS	Private
Goal 1: Create an attractive and functional built environment that meets the needs of existing residents and businesses and creates opportunities to attract new residents and economic opportunities.											
1.1a	Create Attractive Gateways - Planning and Design	\$50,000		\$50,000			\$50,000	\$20,000		\$30,000	
1.1b	Create Attractive Gateways - Planning and Design	\$150,000	A		\$450,000		\$450,000	\$50,000		\$350,000	\$50,000
1.2	Enforce building maintenance standards	P	Staff time	Staff time			\$0	Staff time			
1.3	Increase Fees for Code Violations	P	Staff time	Staff time			\$0	Staff time			
1.4	Continue to provide code enforcement education		\$2,500	\$2,500			\$2,500	\$2,500			
1.5	Consider consolidating services with nearby municipalities	P	\$25,000	\$25,000			\$25,000			\$25,000	
1.6	Address Problem Structures	P	Staff time	Staff time			\$0	\$0			
Goal 2: Provide a variety of high-quality housing opportunities											
2.1a	Identify areas of housing rehabilitation	P	\$25,000	\$25,000			\$25,000			\$25,000	
2.1b	Implement housing rehabilitation programs		\$405,000	\$405,000	\$405,000		\$1,215,000	\$15,000		\$1,200,000	
2.2	Utilize NYS incentives for home reinvestment		\$5,000	\$5,000			\$5,000	\$5,000			
2.3	Continue Homeownership Program and Maximize rate of homeownership		\$750,000	\$400,000	\$350,000		\$750,000			\$750,000	
Goal 3: Identify & develop economic initiatives, enhance the City's commercial districts, provide strong employment opportunities and meet residents' needs for good & services.											
3.1a	Redevelop key vacant & underutilized buildings and sites- planning and design	P	\$25,000	\$25,000			\$25,000	\$5,000		\$20,000	
3.1b	Redevelop key vacant & underutilized buildings and sites - implementation		\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000		\$2,000,000		\$250,000	\$250,000	\$1,500,000
3.2a	Develop a small business program - planning and desiogn	P	\$25,000	\$25,000			\$25,000			\$25,000	
3.2b	Develop a small business program - implementation		\$400,000	\$400,000			\$400,000			\$400,000	
3.3	Implement Downtown marketing program	P	\$15,000	\$15,000			\$15,000	\$5,000		\$5,000	\$5,000
3.4	Define a "recognizable" area as the Central Business District	P	\$25,000	\$25,000			\$25,000			\$25,000	
3.5	Identify areas suitable for major redevelopment effort in the city	P	\$25,000	\$25,000			\$25,000			\$25,000	
3.6	Create a redevelopment strategy	P	\$25,000	\$25,000			\$25,000			\$25,000	
3.7	Prepare a shared development strategy with the Town of Colonie	P	Staff time	Staff time				Staff time			
Goal 4: Offer high-quality recreation amaanities											
4.1	Finish connections to Hudson Mohawk Trail		\$262,500	\$131,250	\$131,250		\$262,500	\$50,000		\$212,500	
4.2	Support new community events		\$10,000	A	\$30,000	\$40,000	\$30,000	\$100,000	\$20,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
4.3	Improve use of Hudson Shores Park	P	\$25,000		\$25,000		\$25,000	\$10,000		\$15,000	
4.4	Create a series of walking trails in City neighborhoods	P	\$35,000		\$35,000		\$35,000	\$5,000		\$30,000	
4.5	Promote City programs and events	P	\$15,000	\$15,000			\$15,000	\$2,500		\$10,000	\$2,500
4.6	Develop bicycle freindly information to supplement walking efforts	P	\$20,000		\$20,000		\$20,000	\$2,500		\$10,000	\$2,500
Goal 5: Upgrade and maintain City's physical infrastructure.											
5.1	Plan to separate storm and sanitary sewer systems	P	\$50,000		\$25,000	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$10,000		\$40,000	\$0
5.2	Develop a City-wide enegy savings program	P	\$30,000		\$15,000	\$15,000	\$30,000	\$5,000		\$20,000	\$5,000
Goal 6: Preserve and promote Watervliet's community character and the City's rich cultural and historic resources											
	Redevelop vacant buildings that have significant cultural or historic significance to the city	P	\$4,075,000	\$75,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$4,075,000	\$5,000	\$250,000	\$820,000	\$3,000,000
	Identify historic resources in the City for possible inclusion in local and/or state and federal historic districts	P	\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000	\$2,500		\$12,500	\$0
Goal 7: Develop new and strengthen existing mechanisms for preserving and promoting City's historic resources and enhancing neighborhood character.											
7.1	Implement Route 32 Corridor Study	P	\$5,000	\$5,000			\$5,000	\$5,000			
7.2	Study rerouting I-787 for better river access	P	\$80,000	\$40,000	\$40,000		\$80,000	\$20,000		\$60,000	
7.3	Advocate state payments for loss of I-787 taxable property		Staff time	Staff time	Staff time		\$0	Staff time			
7.4	Request that NYS reduce the speed limit on I-787 to 45 mph		Staff time	Staff time	Staff time		\$0	Staff time			
7.5	Mitigate noise along I-787	P	\$35,000	\$15,000	\$20,000		\$35,000	\$5,000		\$30,000	
7.6	Study development of an exit off 787 into the Watervliet Arsenal	P	\$50,000			\$50,000	\$50,000			\$40,000	\$10,000
Goal 8: Improve land management by updating the Ctty's Zoning Ordinance											
8.1	Incorporate amendments on Zoning map		\$5,000	\$5,000			\$5,000	\$5,000			
8.2	Adopt desgn standards for buildings, landscaping, screening,lighting		\$15,000	\$7,500	\$7,500		\$15,000			\$15,000	
8.3	Develop a commercial overlay zone for 19th east of 12th Ave and Route 32		Staff time	Staff time	Staff time		\$0	Staff time			
8.4	Review and update parking standards		Staff time	Staff time	Staff time		\$0	Staff time			
8.5	Encourage reconversion of multi-unit structures to single and 2 family homes		\$3,500	\$3,500			\$3,500	\$1,000		\$2,500	
Total City Action Plans				\$1,779,750	\$4,578,750	\$3,525,000	\$9,883,500	\$251,000	\$500,000	\$4,512,500	\$4,615,000

City of Watervliet Action Plans

C-2

Analysis of City Funding of Action Plan Projects

	Total Cost	% City	Year 1-3	Year 4-7	Year 8-10	City Total
Goal 1: Create an attractive and functional built environment that meets the needs of existing residents and businesses and creates opportunities to attract new residents and economic opportunities.						
1.1a Create Attractive Gateways - Planning and Design	\$50,000	40.0%	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000
1.1b Create Attractive Gateways - Planning and Design	\$450,000	11.1%	\$0	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000
1.2 Enforce building maintenance standards	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1.3 Increase Fees for Code Violations	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1.4 Continue to provide code enforcement education	\$2,500	100.0%	\$2,500	\$0	\$0	\$2,500
1.5 Consider consolidating services with nearby municipalities	\$25,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1.6 Address Problem Structures	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Goal 2: Provide a variety of high-quality housing opportunities						
2.1a Identify areas of housing rehabilitation	\$25,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2.1b Implement housing rehabilitation programs	\$1,215,000	1.2%	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$15,000
2.2 Utilize NYS incentives for home reinvestment	\$5,000	100.0%	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000
2.3 Continue Homeownership Program and Maximize rate of homeownership	\$750,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Goal 3: Identify & develop economic initiatives, enhance the City's commercial districts, provide strong employment opportunities and meet residents' needs for good & services.						
3.1a Redevelop key vacant & underutilized buildings and sites- planning and design	\$25,000	20.0%	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000
3.1b Redevelop key vacant & underutilized buildings and sites - implementation	\$2,000,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3.2a Develop a small business program - planning and design	\$25,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3.2b Develop a small business program - implementation	\$400,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3.3 Implement Downtown marketing program	\$15,000	33.3%	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000
3.4 Define a "recognizable" area as the Central Business District	\$25,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3.5 Identify areas suitable for major redevelopment effort in the city	\$25,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3.6 Create a redevelopment strategy	\$25,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3.7 Prepare a shared development strategy with the Town of Colonie	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Goal 4: Offer high-quality recreation amenities						
4.1 Finish connections to Hudson Mohawk Trail	\$262,500	19.0%	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0	\$50,000
4.2 Support new community events	\$100,000	20.0%	\$6,000	\$8,000	\$6,000	\$20,000
4.3 Improve use of Hudson Shores Park	\$25,000	40.0%	\$0	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000
4.4 Create a series of walking trails in City neighborhoods	\$35,000	14.3%	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
4.5 Promote City programs and events	\$15,000	16.7%	\$2,500	\$0	\$0	\$2,500
4.6 Develop bicycle friendly information to supplement walking efforts	\$20,000	12.5%	\$0	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500
Goal 5: Upgrade and maintain City's physical infrastructure.						
5.1 Plan to separate storm and sanitary sewer systems	\$50,000	20.0%	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
5.2 Develop a City-wide energy savings program	\$30,000	16.7%			\$2,500	\$2,500
Goal 6: Preserve and promote Watervliet's community character and the City's rich cultural and historic resources						
6.1 Redevelop vacant buildings that have significant cultural or historic significance	\$4,075,000	0.1%	\$92	\$2,454	\$2,454	\$5,000
6.2 Identify historic resources in the City for possible inclusion in local and/or state historic district	\$15,000	16.7%	\$0	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500
Goal 7: Develop new and strengthen existing mechanisms for preserving and promoting City's historic resources and enhancing neighborhood character.						
7.1 Implement Route 32 Corridor Study	\$5,000	100.0%	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000
7.2 Study rerouting I-787 for better river access	\$80,000	25.0%	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0	\$20,000
7.3 Advocate state payments for loss of I-787 taxable property	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7.4 Request that NYS reduce the speed limit on I-787 to 45 mph	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7.5 Mitigate noise along I-787	\$35,000	14.3%	\$2,143	\$2,857	\$0	\$5,000
7.6 Study development of an exit off 787 into the Watervliet Arsenal	\$50,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Goal 8: Improve land management by updating the City's Zoning Ordinance						
8.1 Incorporate amendments on Zoning map	\$5,000	100.0%	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000
8.2 Adopt design standards for buildings, landscaping, screening, lighting	\$15,000	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8.3 Develop a commercial overlay zone for 19th east of 12th Ave and Route 32	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8.4 Review and update parking standards	\$0	0.0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8.5 Encourage reconversion of multi-unit structures to single and 2 family homes	\$3,500	28.6%	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,000
	\$9,883,500	2.5%	\$99,235	\$128,311	\$20,954	\$248,500

City of Watervliet Action Plans

Annual Tax Projections for Period:

C-3

Analysis of Economic Impacts of Action Plan Projects

	Total Cost	Assessment	Year 1-3	Year 4-7	Year 8-10
Goal 1: Create an attractive and functional built environment that meets the needs of existing residents and businesses and creates opportunities to attract new residents and economic opportunities.					
1.1a Create Attractive Gateways - Planning and Design	\$50,000				
1.1b Create Attractive Gateways - Planning and Design	\$450,000				
1.2 Enforce building maintenance standards	\$0				
1.3 Increase Fees for Code Violations	\$0				
1.4 Continue to provide code enforcement education	\$2,500				
1.5 Consider consolidating services with nearby municipalities	\$25,000				
1.6 Address Problem Structures	\$0				
Goal 2: Provide a variety of high-quality housing opportunities					
2.1a Identify areas of housing rehabilitation	\$25,000				
2.1b Implement housing rehabilitation programs	\$1,215,000	\$756,338	\$3,857	\$7,715	\$11,572
2.2 Utilize NYS incentives for home reinvestment	\$5,000				
2.3 Continue Homeownership Program and Maximize rate of homeownership	\$750,000				
Goal 3: Identify & develop economic initiatives, enhance the City's commercial districts, provide strong employment opportunities and meet residents' needs for good & services.					
3.1a Redevelop key vacant & underutilized buildings and sites- planning and design	\$25,000				
3.1b Redevelop key vacant & underutilized buildings and sites - implementation	\$2,000,000	\$1,245,000	\$0	\$9,524	\$19,049
3.2a Develop a small business program - planning and design	\$25,000				
3.2b Develop a small business program - implementation	\$400,000				
3.3 Implement Downtown marketing program	\$15,000				
3.4 Define a "recognizable" area as the Central Business District	\$25,000				
3.5 Identify areas suitable for major redevelopment effort in the city	\$25,000				
3.6 Create a redevelopment strategy	\$25,000				
3.7 Prepare a shared development strategy with the Town of Colonie	\$0				
Goal 4: Offer high-quality recreation amenities					
4.1 Finish connections to Hudson Mohawk Trail	\$262,500				
4.2 Support new community events	\$100,000				
4.3 Improve use of Hudson Shores Park	\$25,000				
4.4 Create a series of walking trails in City neighborhoods	\$35,000				
4.5 Promote City programs and events	\$15,000				
4.6 Develop bicycle friendly information to supplement walking efforts	\$20,000				
Goal 5: Upgrade and maintain City's physical infrastructure.					
5.1 Plan to separate storm and sanitary sewer systems	\$50,000				
5.2 Develop a City-wide energy savings program	\$30,000				
Goal 6: Preserve and promote Watervliet's community character and the City's rich cultural and historic resources					
6.1 Redevelop vacant buildings that have significant cultural or historic significance	\$4,075,000	\$2,536,688	\$714	\$19,763	\$38,811
6.2 Identify historic resources in the City for possible inclusion in local and/or state	\$15,000				
Goal 7: Develop new and strengthen existing mechanisms for preserving and promoting City's historic resources and enhancing neighborhood character.					
7.1 Implement Route 32 Corridor Study	\$5,000				
7.2 Study rerouting I-787 for better river access	\$80,000				
7.3 Advocate state payments for loss of I-787 taxable property	\$0				
7.4 Request that NYS reduce the speed limit on I-787 to 45 mph	\$0				
7.5 Mitigate noise along I-787	\$35,000				
7.6 Study development of an exit off 787 into the Watervliet Arsenal	\$50,000				
Goal 8: Improve land management by updating the City's Zoning Ordinance					
8.1 Incorporate amendments on Zoning map	\$5,000				
8.2 Adopt design standards for buildings, landscaping, screening, lighting	\$15,000				
8.3 Develop a commercial overlay zone for 19th east of 12th Ave and Route 32	\$0				
8.4 Review and update parking standards	\$0				
8.5 Encourage reconversion of multi-unit structures to single and 2 family homes	\$3,500				
	\$9,883,500	\$4,538,025	\$4,572	\$37,002	\$69,432