



DOWNTOWN ALBANY STRATEGY

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1

August 6, 2025



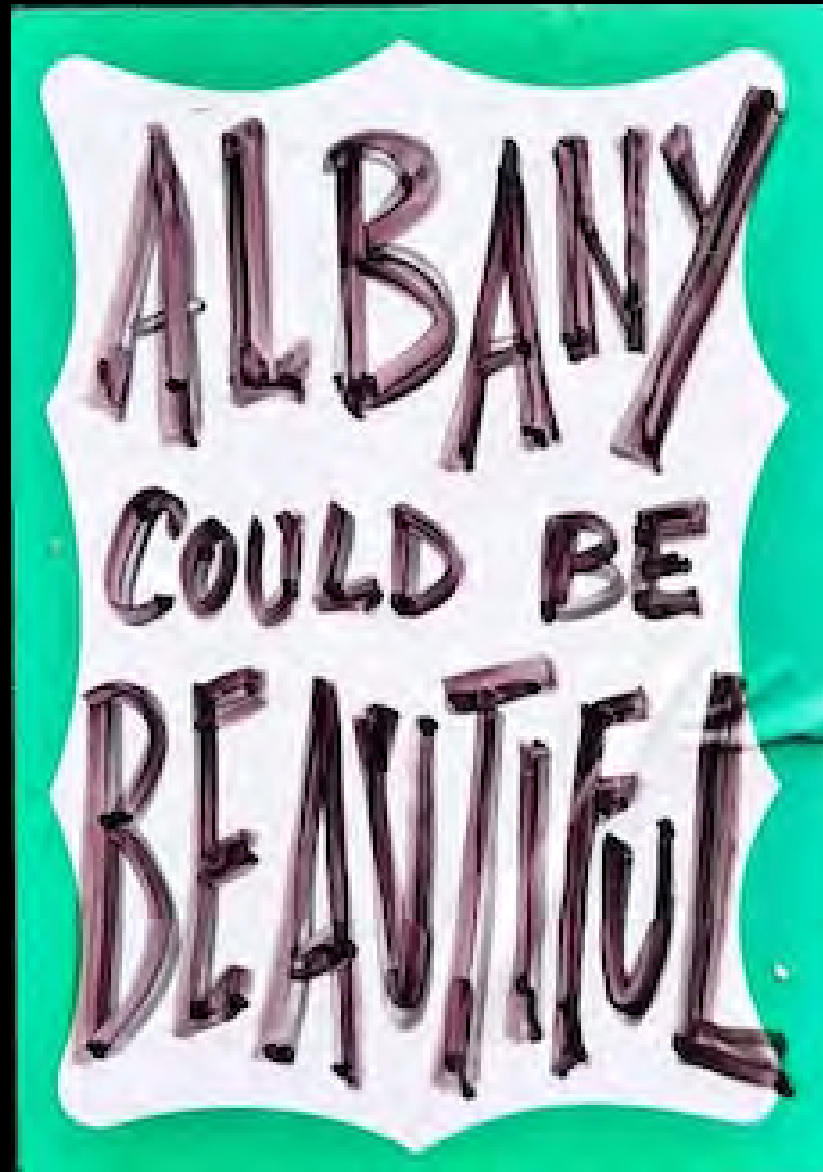
**Empire State
Development**





HOTEL HAMPTON
ROOM \$2.50 A DAY





Credit: @samsoncontompasis

PROJECT CONSULTANT TEAM



PROJECT MANAGEMENT + LEAD

ENGAGEMENT, ASSESSMENT, AND LOCAL EXPERTISE



Community Engagement &
Stakeholder Alignment (Certified
WBE)

STREETSENSE

District Activation, Corridor
Revitalization

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND STRATEGY SUPPORT



Transit, Mobility & Infrastructure
Strategy



Placemaking & Public Space
Strategy (Certified MWBE)

FEASIBILITY AND COSTING SUPPORT

STC Design

Real Estate & Development
Feasibility (Certified WBE and
SDVOB)



Cost Estimation & Analysis
(Certified MBE)

Purpose of tonight's meeting

1. Learn more about the importance and state of Downtown
2. Tell us your goals for this historic investment
3. Learn about the Downtown Albany Strategy process
4. Ensure this work reflects the insights of those who know the City best



Instructions

Go to

www.menti.com

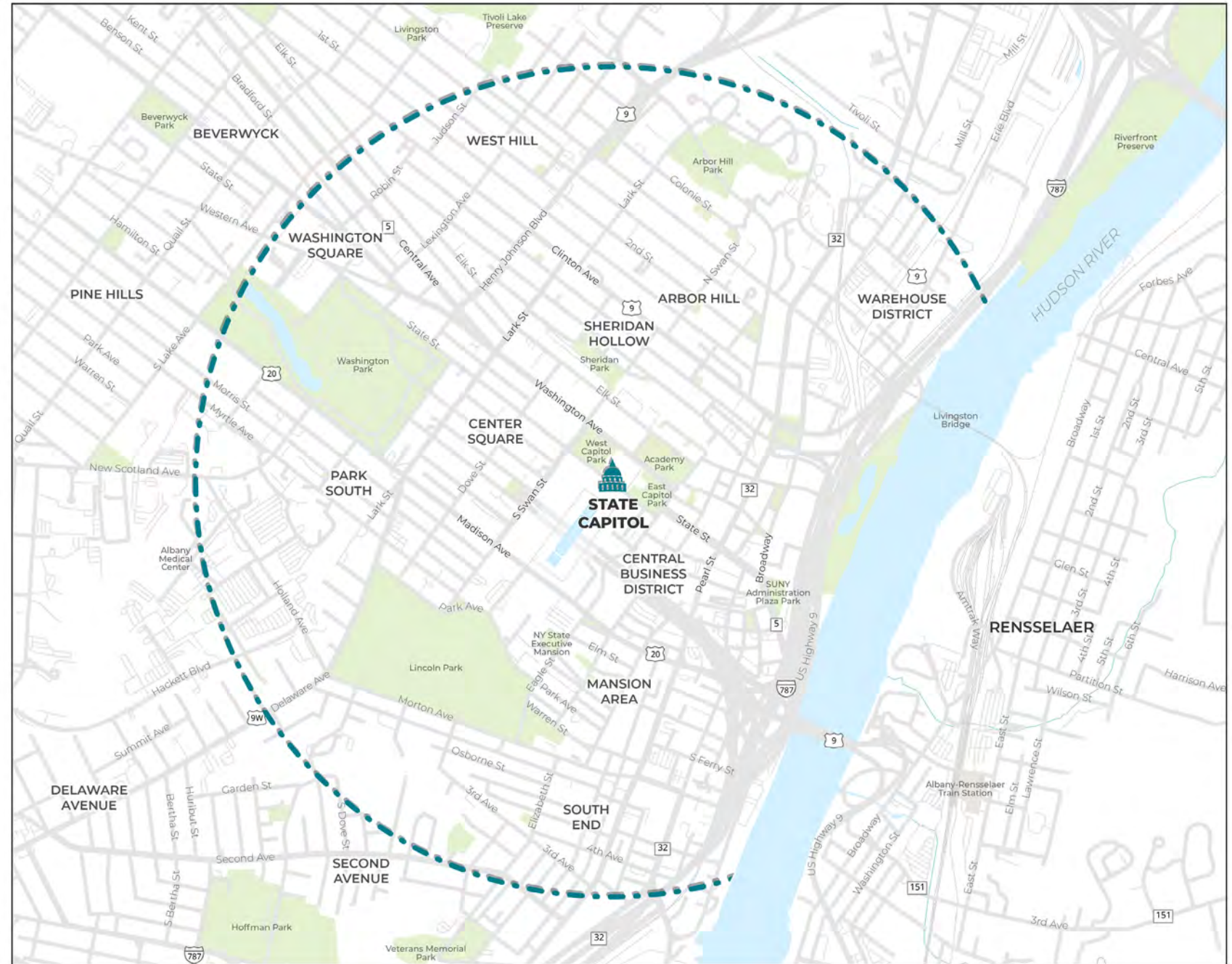
Enter the code

3409 9541



Or use QR code

**To solve big
citywide
challenges,
Downtown must
evolve and grow**





IMPORTANCE OF DOWNTOWNS



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Downtowns showcase and reflect a city

SYMBOLIC

CONNECTED

GATHERING
PLACE

OPPORTUNITY

CIVIC HUB

Downtowns create outsized economic impact

DEVELOPMENT



SPENDING



INFRASTRUCTURE



REGIONAL
ENGINE

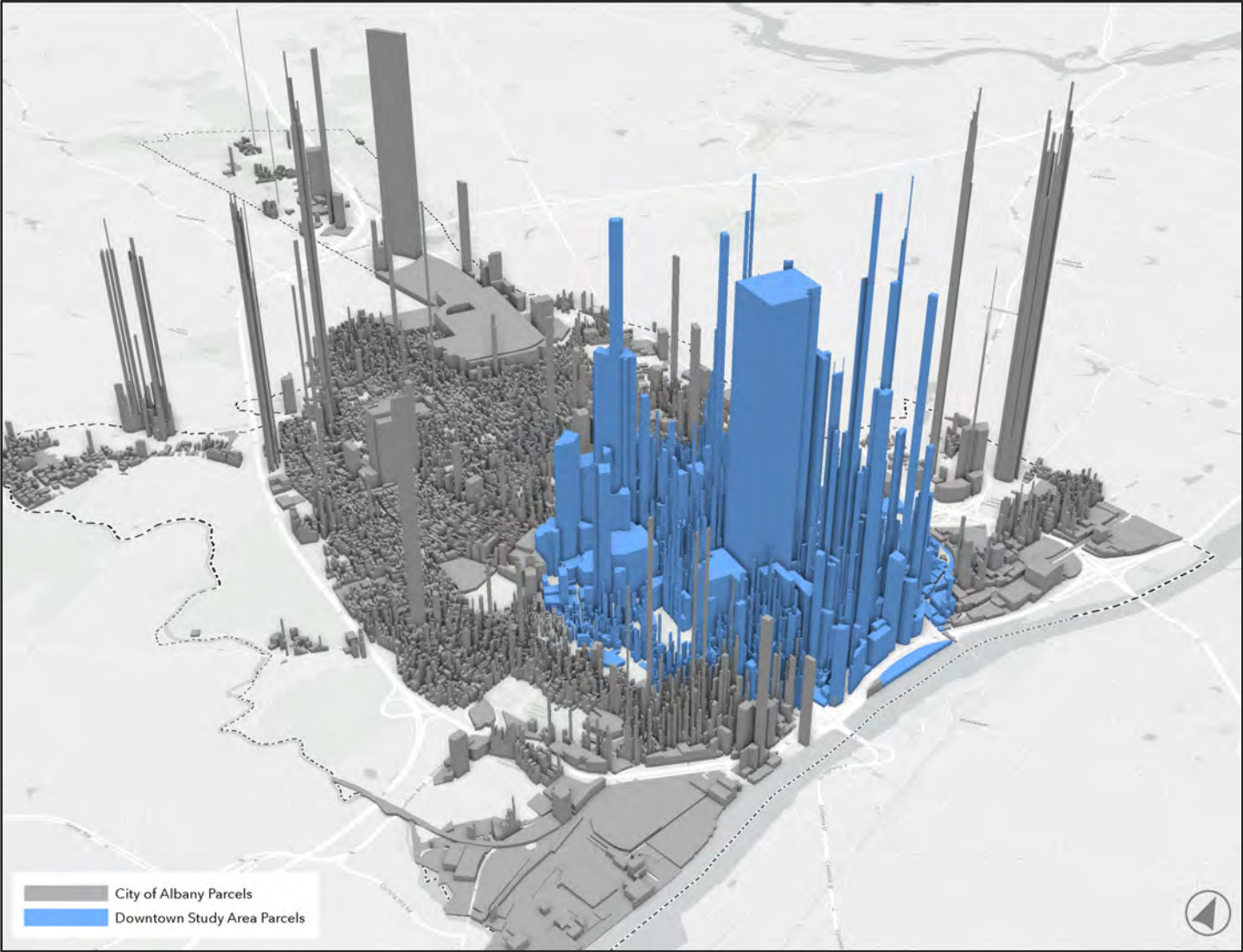


Downtowns can spur broader transformation



Downtowns hold the greatest value — and the greatest potential

Albany's Land Value Per Acre





DOWNTOWNS ARE EVOLVING



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FEATURE · Design

Our cities may never look the same again after the pandemic

From Auckland to Bogota, urban planners are already adapting our cities to lockdown. But will the changes last, and which more radical design proposals -- be it sewer monitors or "epidemic skyscrapers" -- will shape the post-pandemic city?

Coronavirus Crisis Threatens Push for Denser Housing

Transit-oriented developments were seen as a solution to severe housing shortages, but experts say developers need to rethink the design for a post-pandemic world.

The Pandemic Will Change American Retail Forever

The big will get bigger as mom-and-pops perish and shopping goes virtual. In the short term, our cities will become more boring. In the long term, they might just become interesting again.

Manhattan Faces a Reckoning if Working From Home Becomes the Norm

Even after the crisis eases, companies may let workers stay home. That would affect an entire ecosystem, from transit to restaurants to shops. Not to mention the tax base.



Downtowns are reinventing spaces for new uses



Downtowns are offering more choices & experiences



Downtowns are caring for more people in need



Downtowns are becoming places for everyone



Central Business District → Central SOCIAL District

Downtowns are welcoming more people



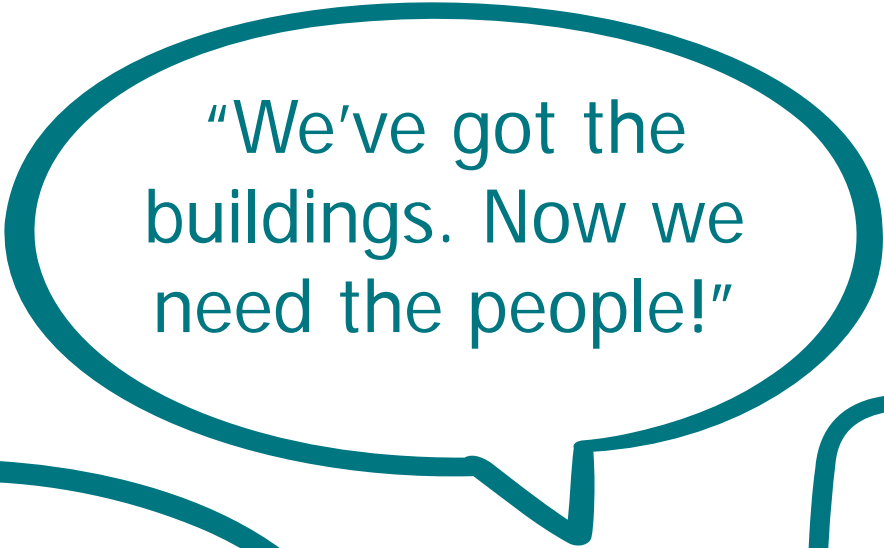


DOWNTOWN ALBANY: NEEDS TO EVOLVE



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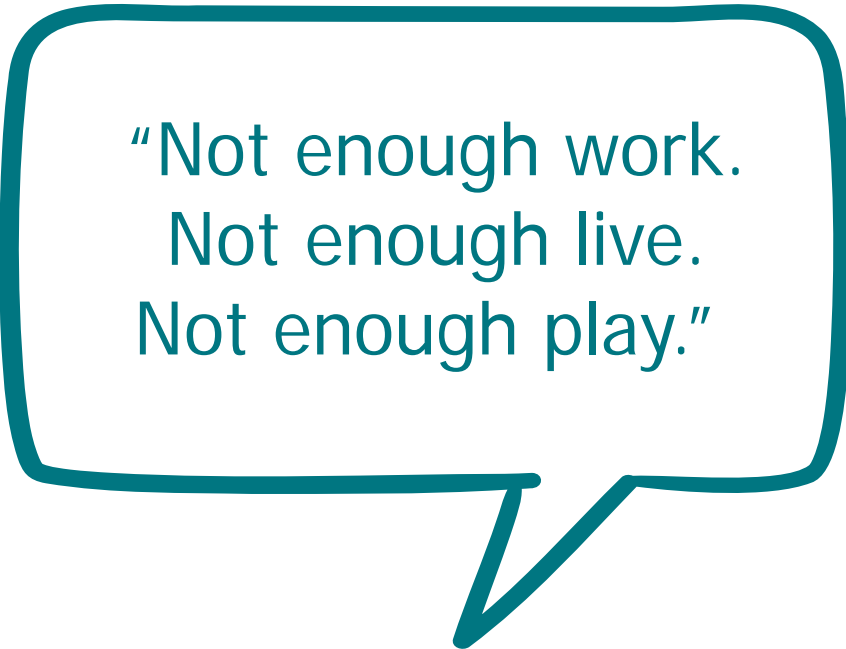
What We've Heard



"We've got the buildings. Now we need the people!"



"We need to demonstrate downtown's sense of community."



"Not enough work.
Not enough live.
Not enough play."

Downtown Albany needs more regional attractions



Alive at 5, Albany



Albany Capital Center & Planned Expansion



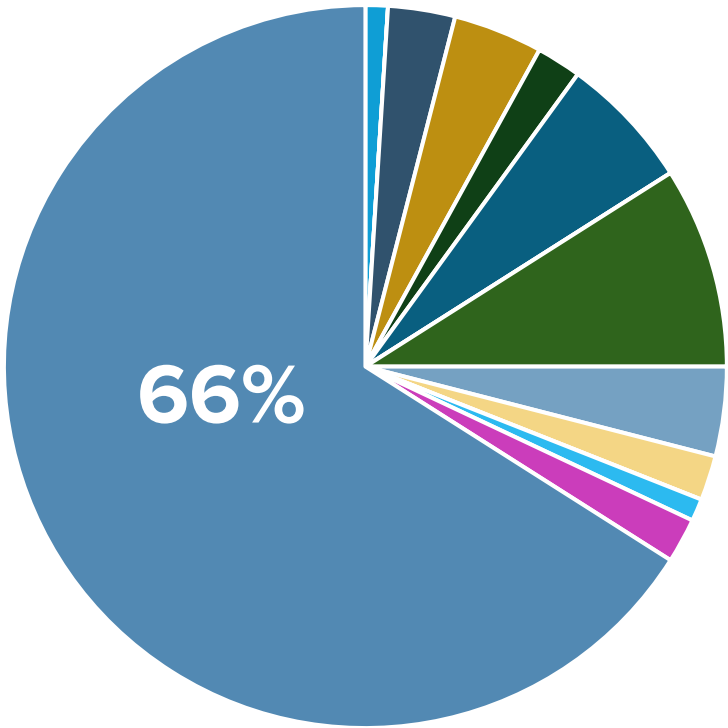
WaterFire, Providence RI



Montreal en Lumiere Festival, Montreal QB

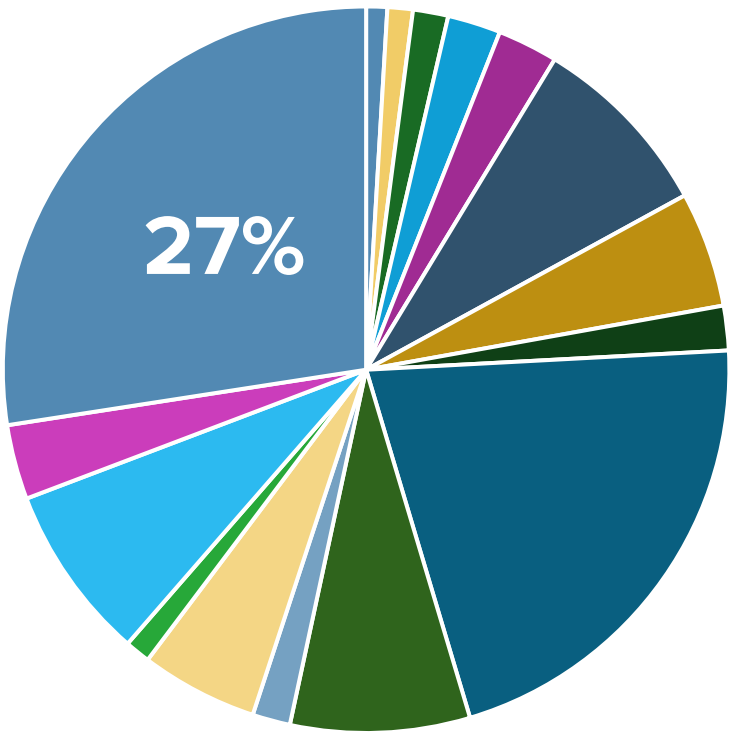
Downtown Albany needs to grow jobs beyond government

2/3 of jobs in downtown Albany are government-related



■ Public Administration

Downtown Austin TX's job sector diversity



■ Public Administration

Downtown Albany needs to activate with a broader mix of uses



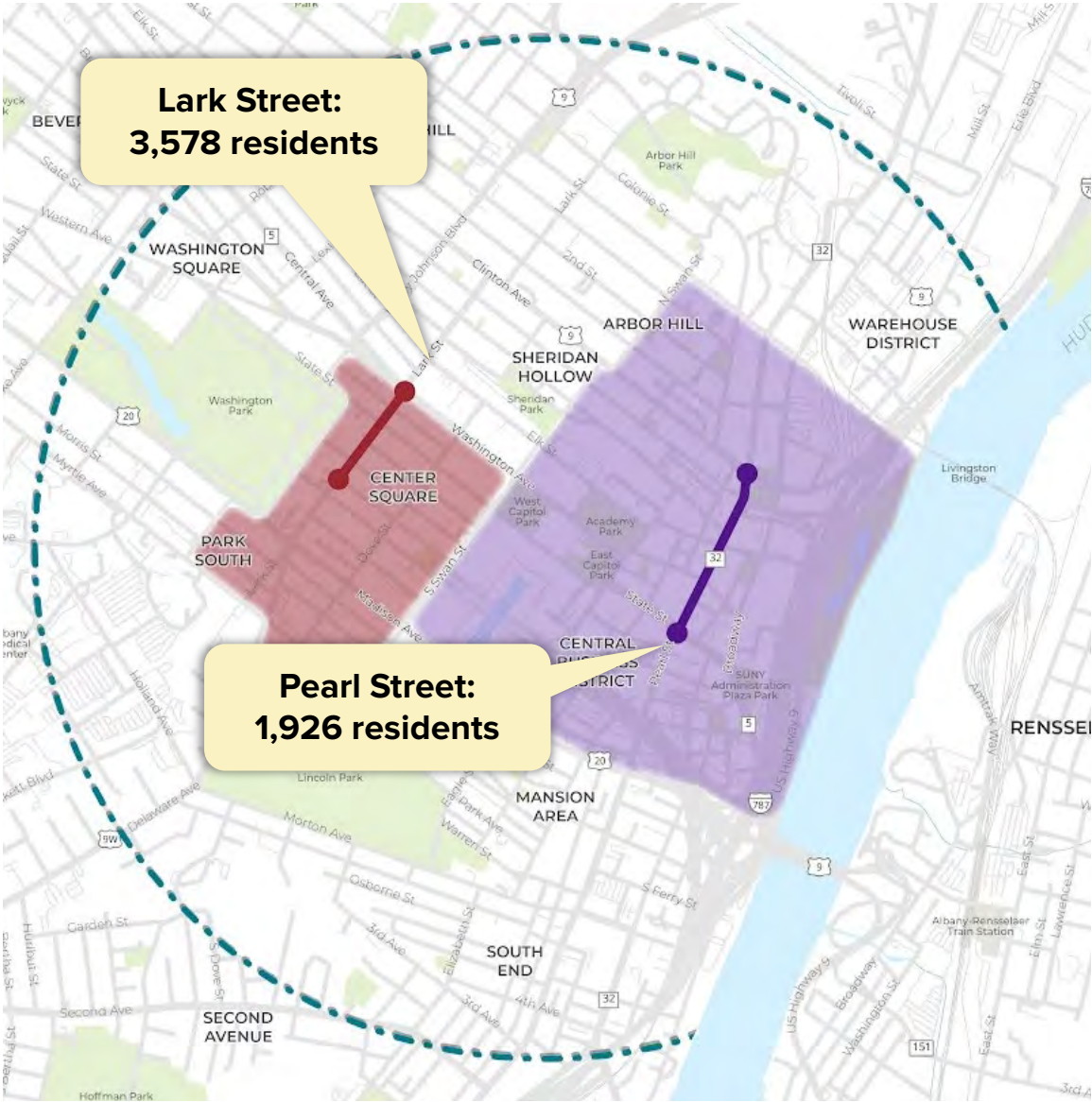
Downtown Albany needs more residents



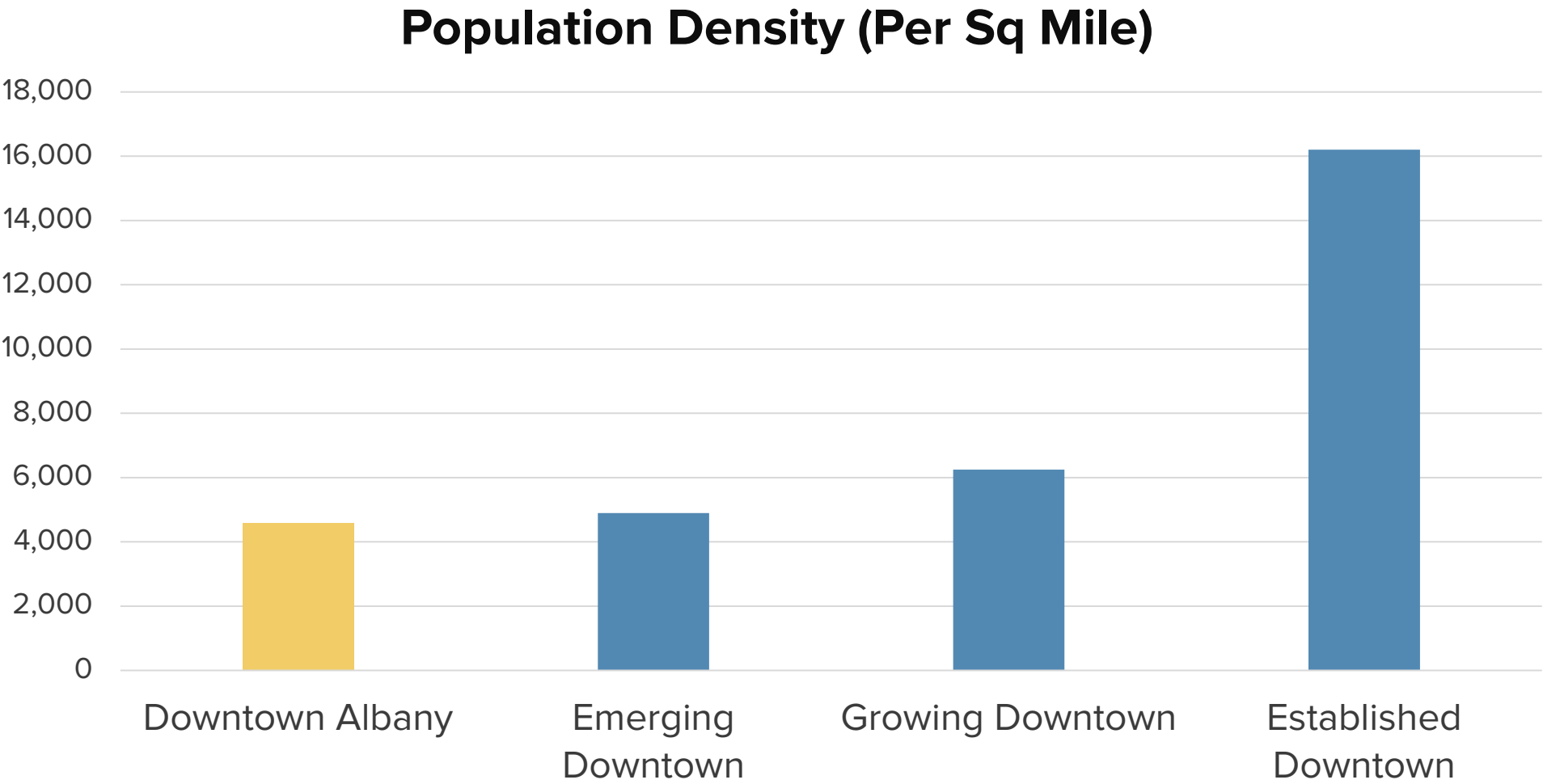
Lark Street



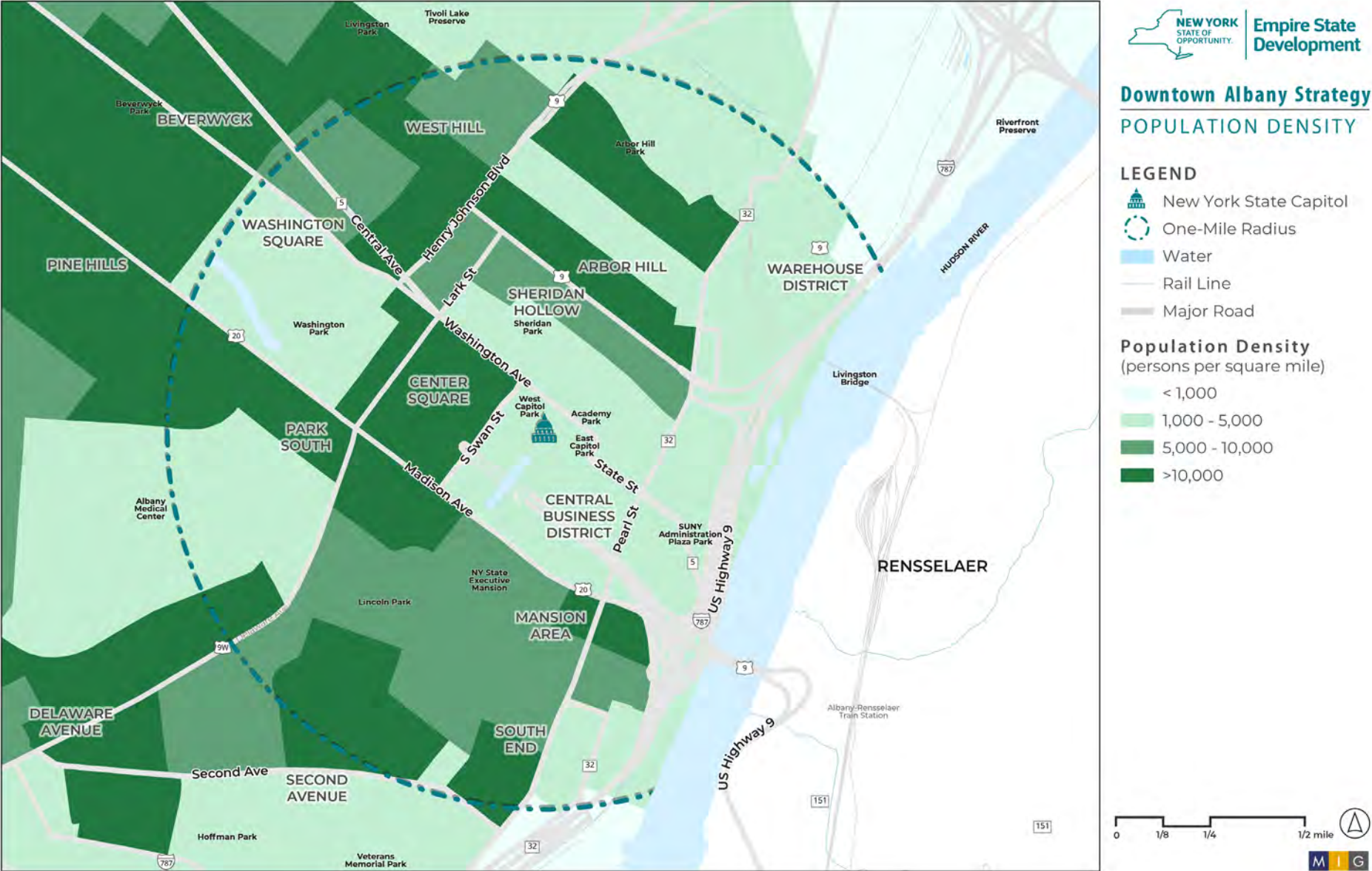
Pearl Street



Downtown Albany needs more residents



Downtown Albany needs significantly more residents in the core



01/81/41/2 mile





DOWNTOWN ALBANY: IT'S TIME TO GROW



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What we've heard

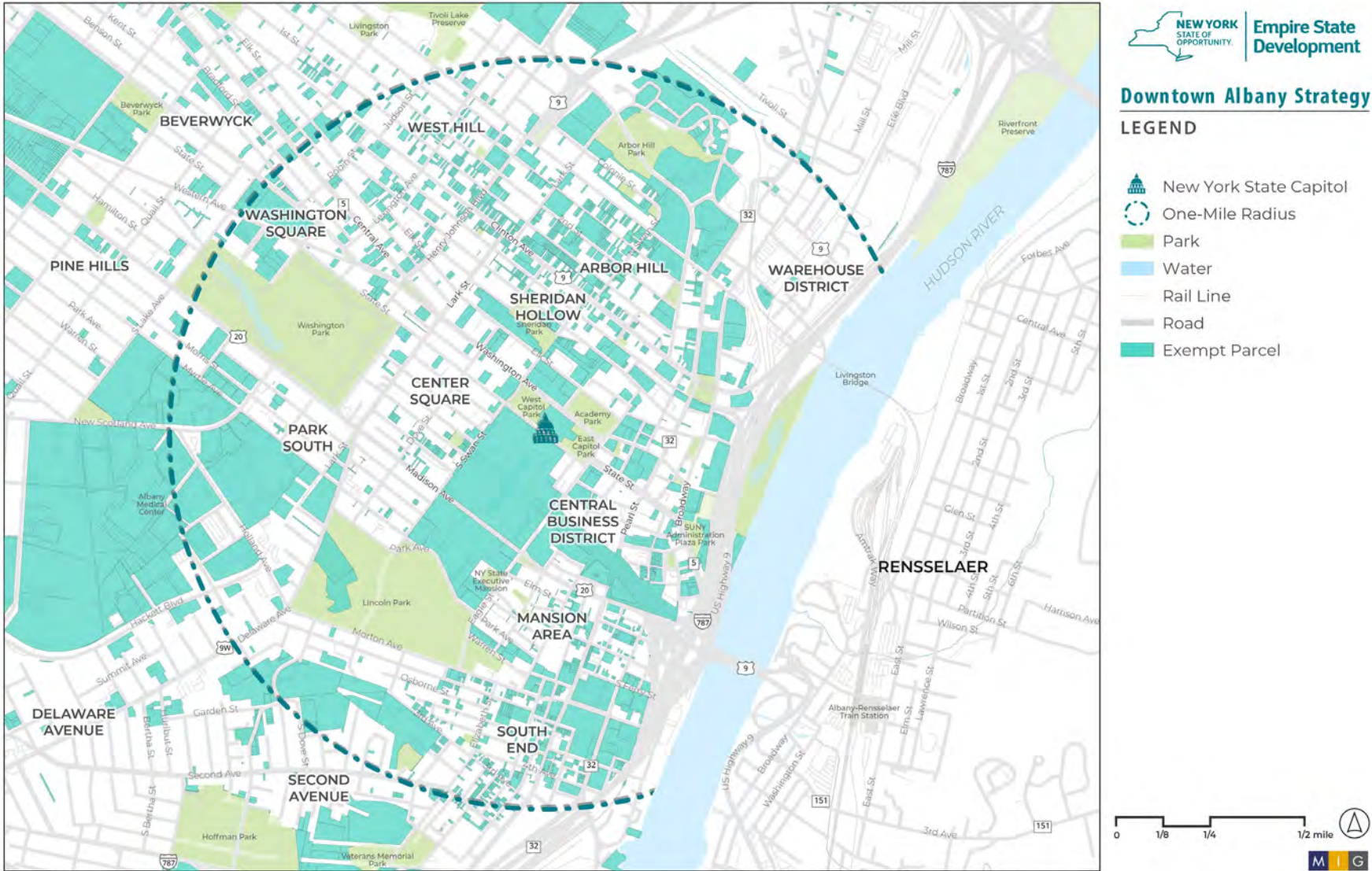
"People just don't feel safe to step out and shop, dine, and spend money in downtown."

"Albany needs to be a place where families and young professionals want to stay long-term."

"The gateway to Albany needs to be welcoming. Right now, the entrance to our city is intimidating and sends the wrong message."

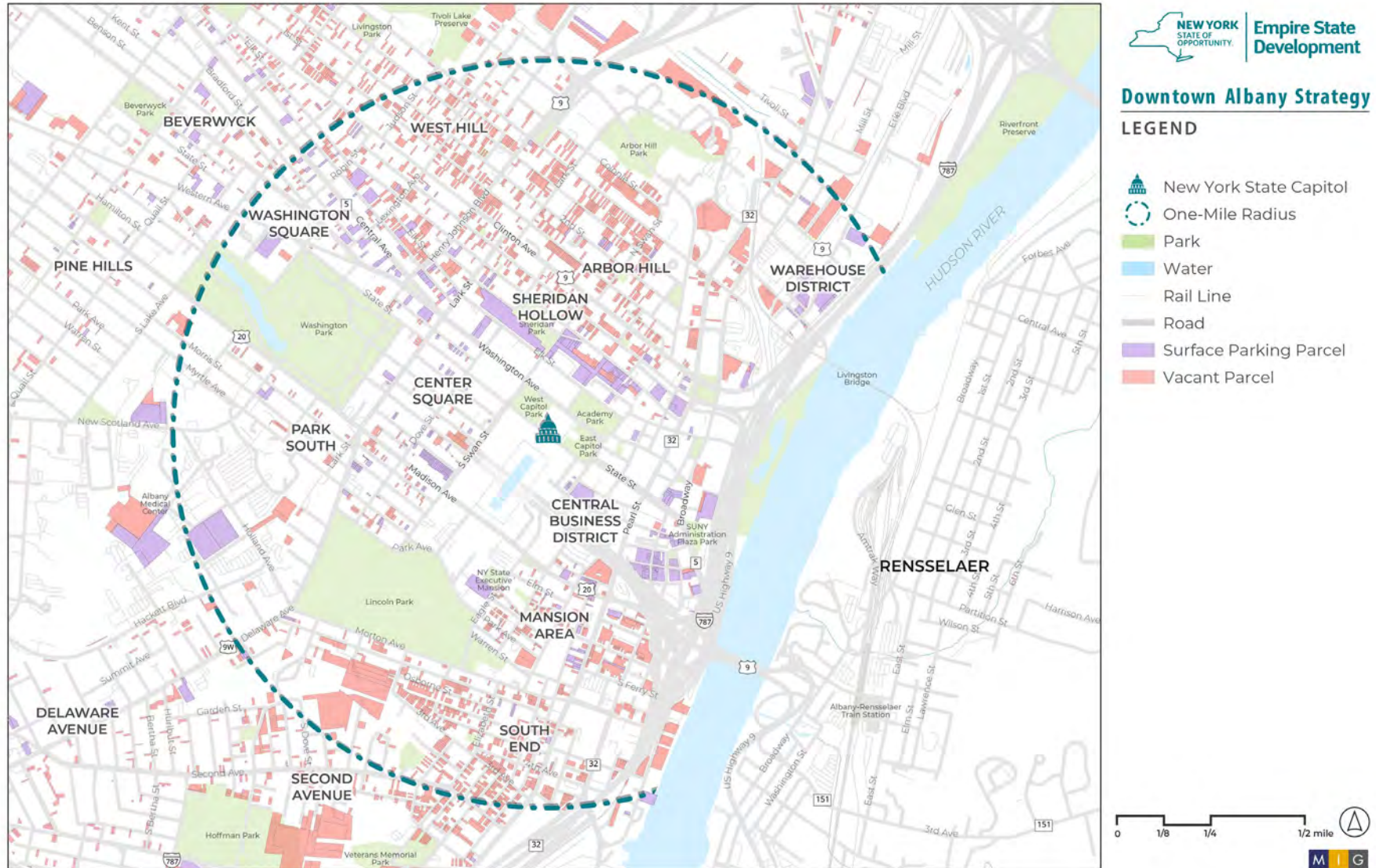
Why growth can't wait

Only 36% of Albany property is taxable



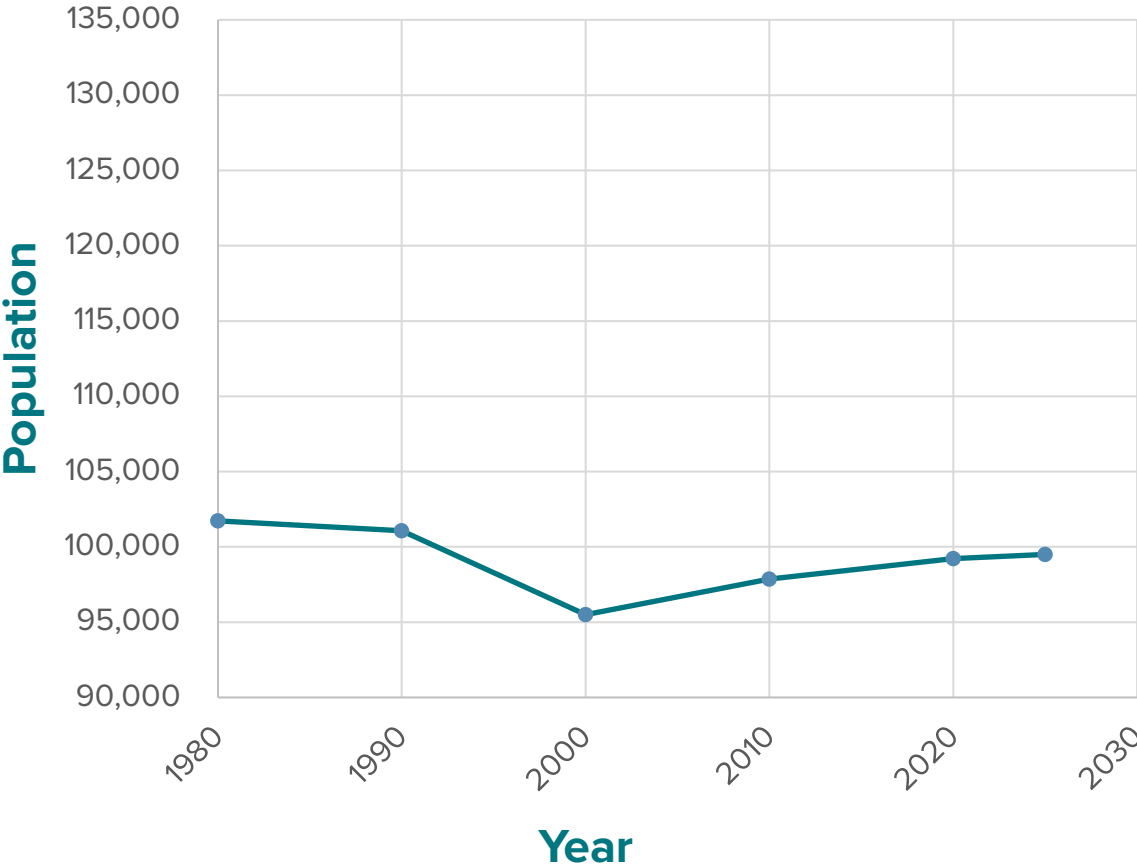
Why growth can't wait

Downtown has 160 acres of vacant parcels and 60 acres of surface parking lots



Albany lags behind a growing region

Albany Population (1980-2025)



Churchill: Troy is building lots of apartments while Albany ... isn't

Mayor Kathy Sheehan blames the inclusionary zoning law for decimating the city's market-rate rental market

By **Chris Churchill**, Columnist
July 19, 2025



Apartments are rising along Fifth Avenue immediately north of downtown Troy as part of the 52-unit Kings Landing II development.

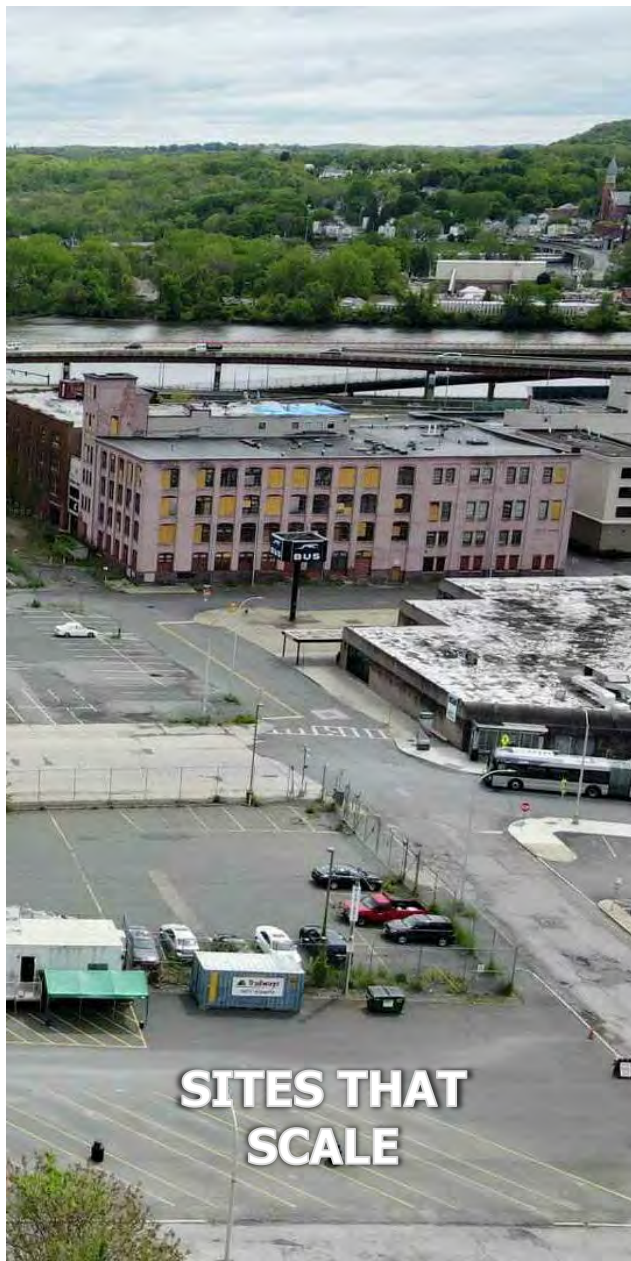


DOWNTOWN ALBANY: READY TO GROW BOLDLY

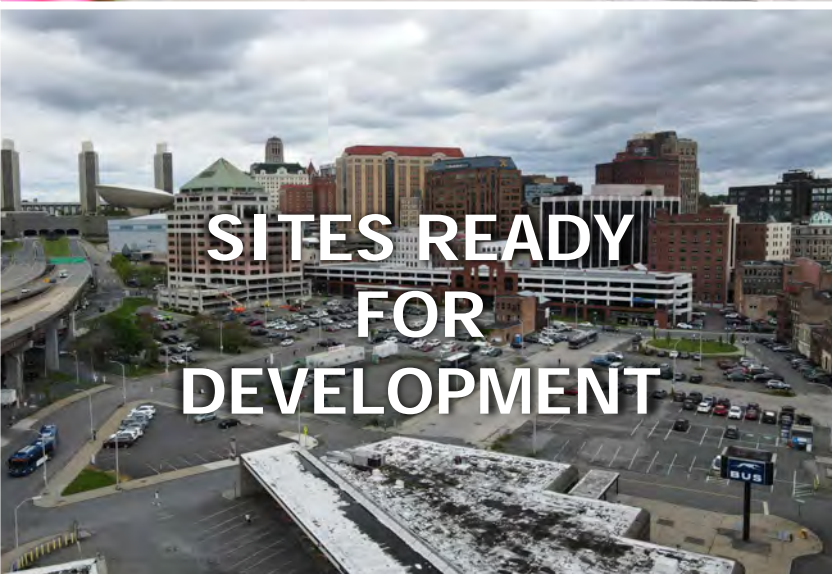


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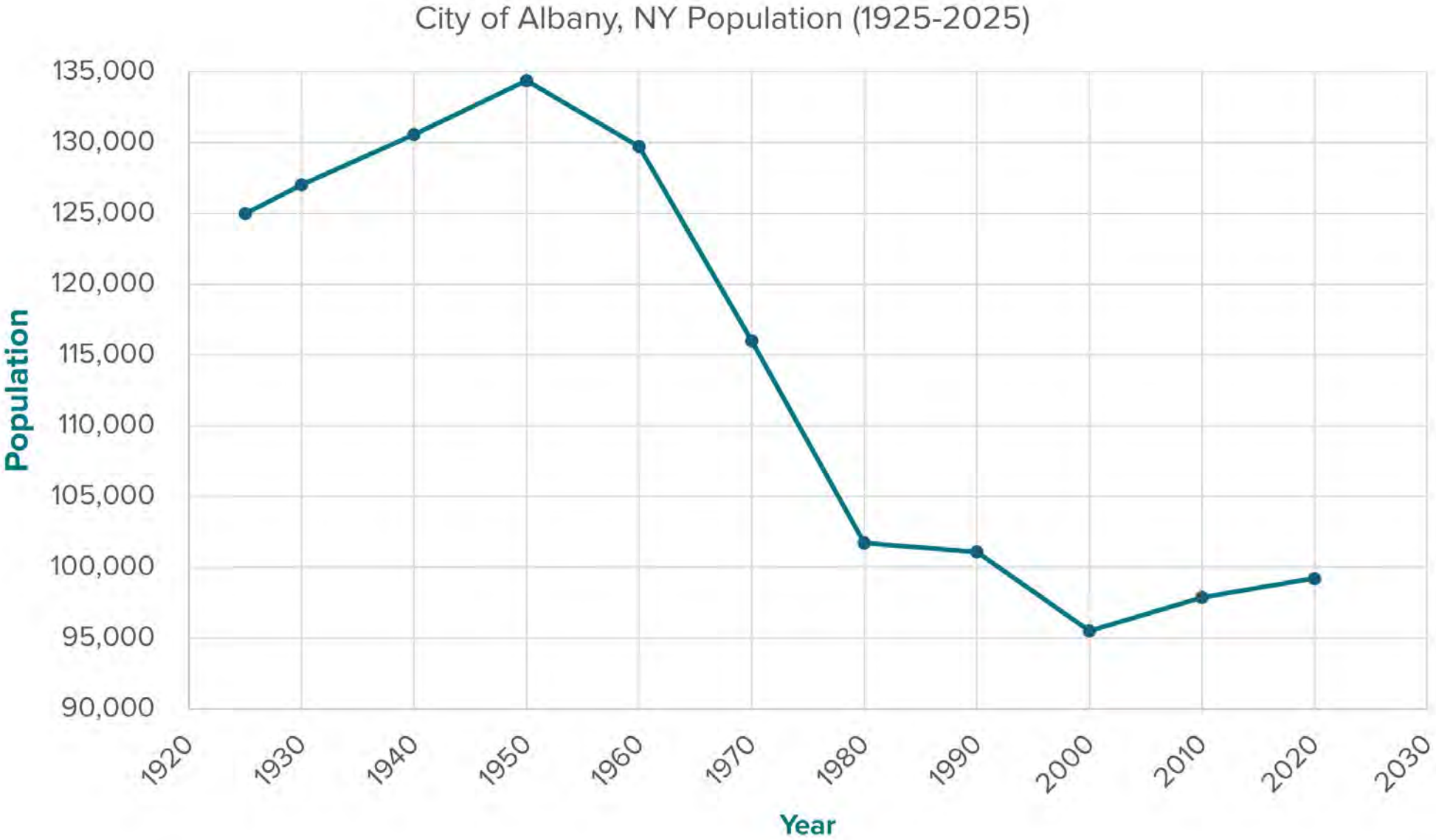
Downtown is Albany's most underutilized asset



Downtown Albany is a smart place to invest



You once had many more people!



What if downtown Albany doubled its population?



Bold Moves: Cleveland, OH

Set a goal to triple its Downtown population (from 5,000 to 15,000) by 2020, and exceeded it!






... TO GROW WITH PURPOSE




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What We've Heard



"Stay focused and deliver real, visible results."



"We need to add housing and amenities at the same time. Can't be one before the other."



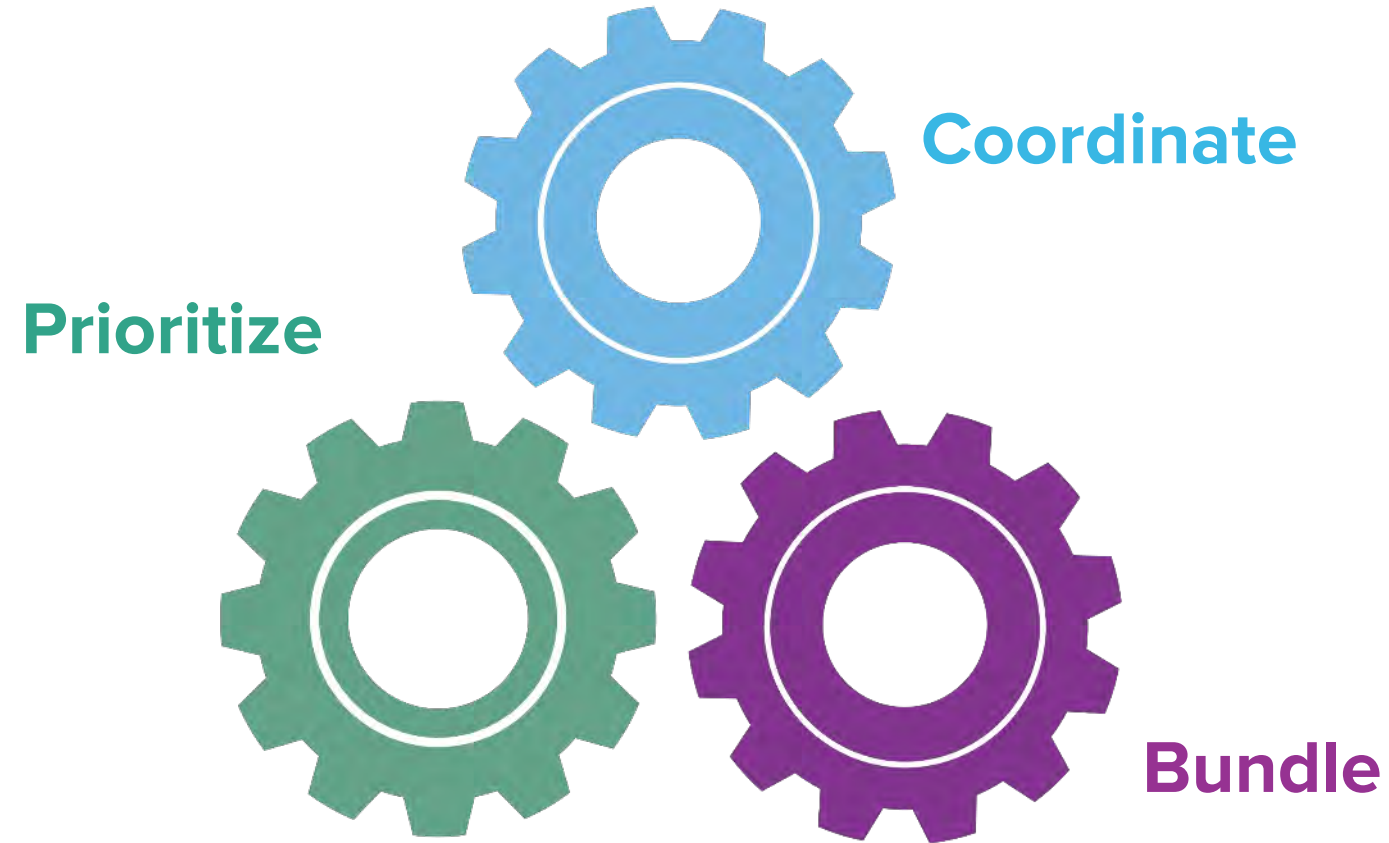
"Don't try to fix everything at once — start with the places where change will matter most, do them well, and build momentum from there."

**Decades of
planning yet
fragmented
progress**

**Missed
opportunities
and lost value**



Find opportunities where public and private investment can come together






.... **AND TO GROW FOR ALL**




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What We've Heard



"You have to feel it.
It has to feel safe and
welcoming."



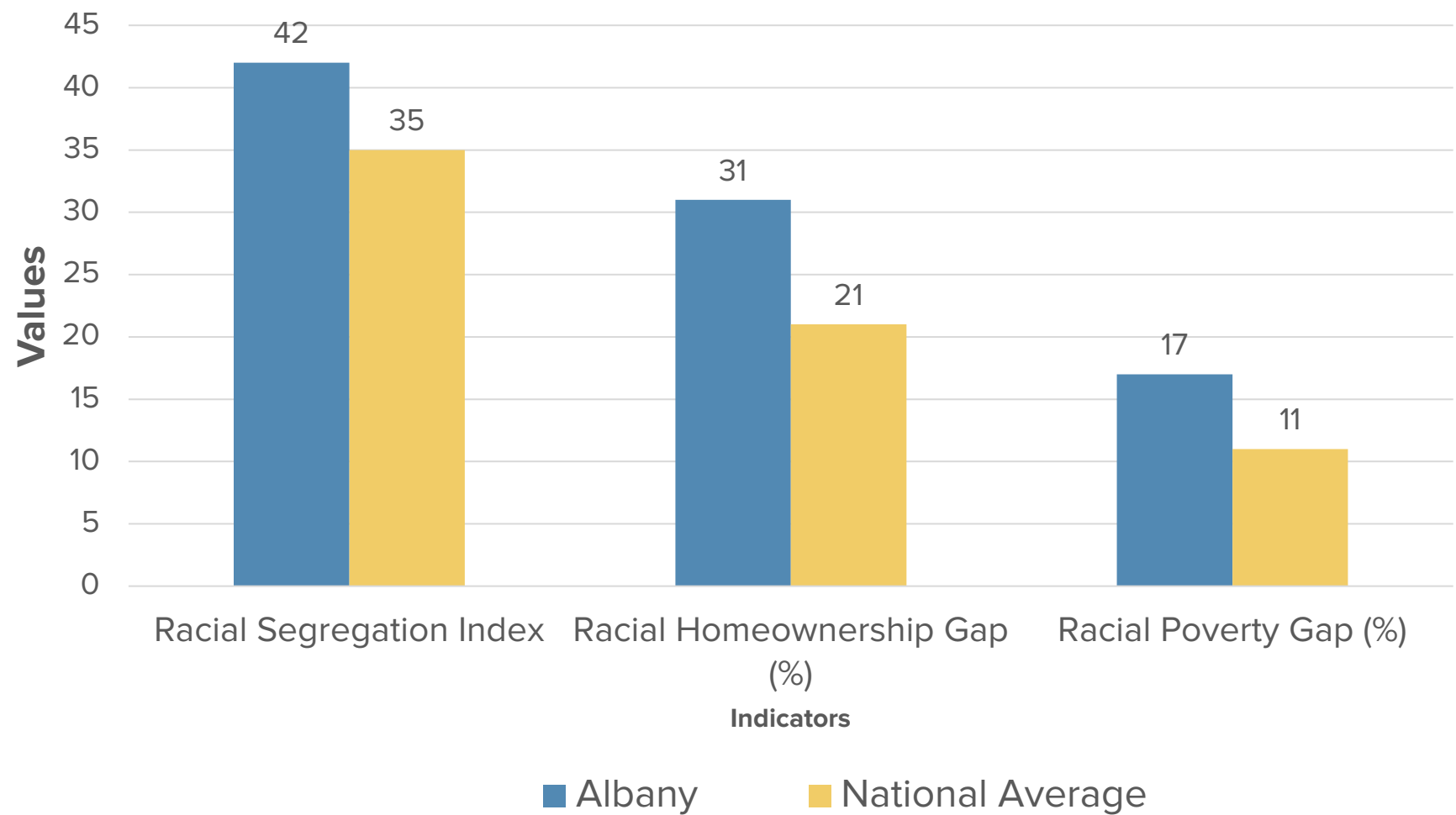
"We need more spaces for youth
throughout Downtown where
they can be safe, creative, and
productive."



"Investments need to be tied
to quality-of-life improvements
that address 'generational
health' for all residents."

Ensure growth reaches more people

Albany vs National Averages on
Racial and Economic Disparities



“The soil is rich, but investments and partnerships need to be intentional.”

*– Deshanna C. Wiggins,
Chief Executive Officer,
Albany Black Chamber of
Commerce*

HOUSING FOR ALL: Columbia, SC



Ensure development delivers safety & infrastructure improvements



SAFETY AS INFRASTRUCTURE: Baton Rouge, LA



Ensure more opportunities for Albany entrepreneurship & small biz



ENTREPRENEURSHIP & SMALL BUSINESSES: Providence, RI



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THE DOWNTOWN ALBANY STRATEGY



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Questions We've Heard

A teal-outlined speech bubble pointing towards the bottom right.

"Have projects
already been
identified?"

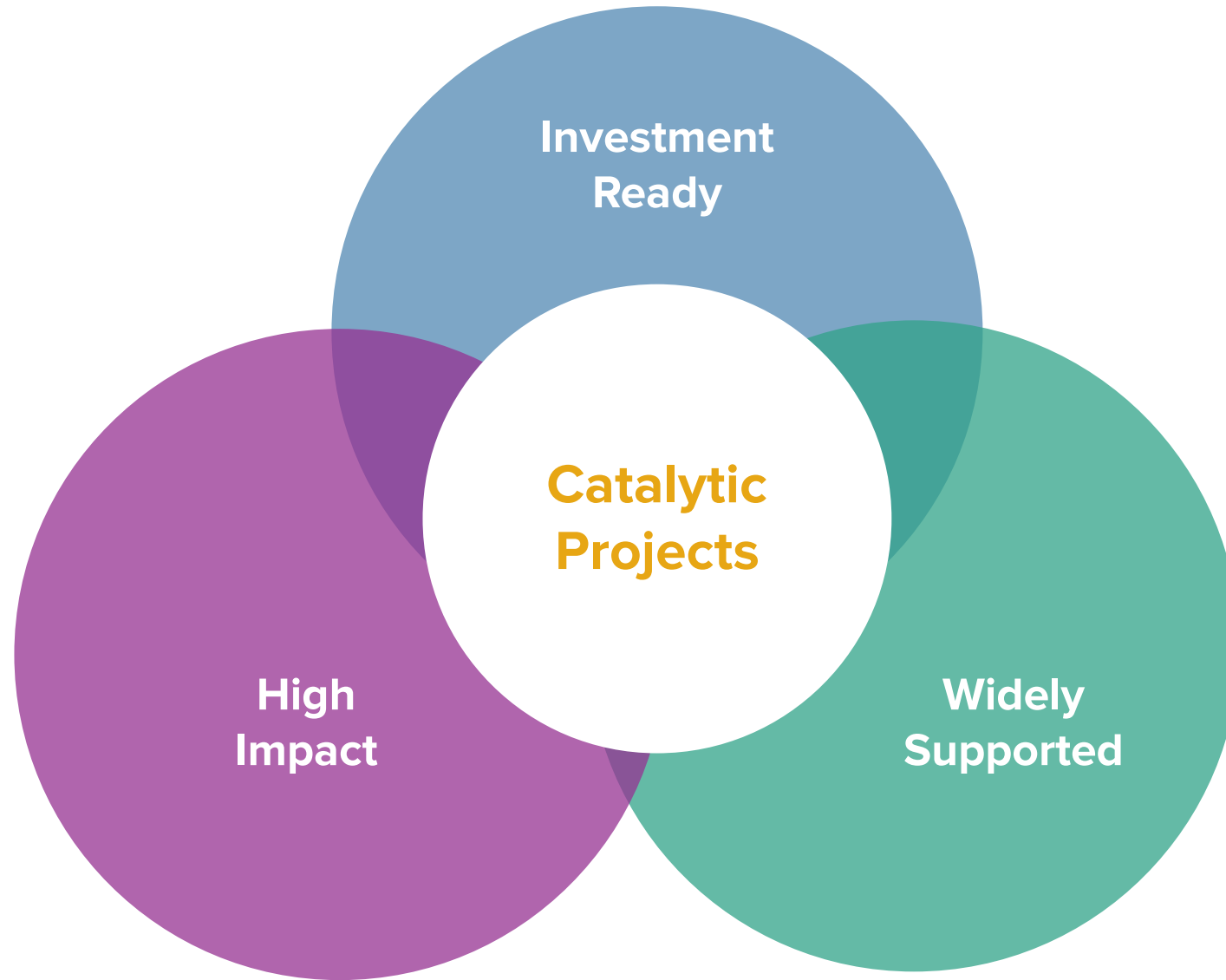
A teal-outlined speech bubble pointing towards the bottom right.

"What kinds of
projects will be
funded?"

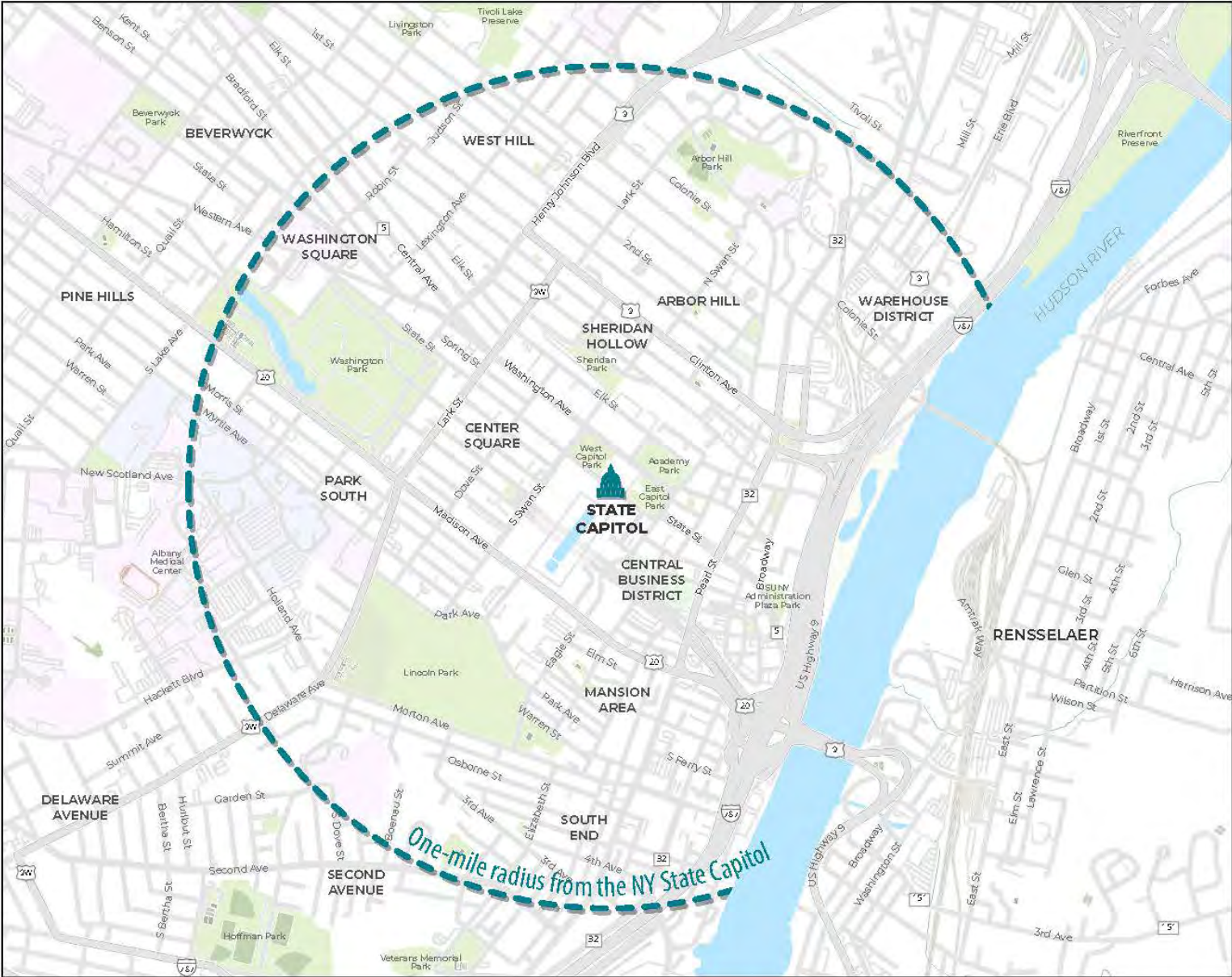
A teal-outlined speech bubble pointing towards the bottom right.

"How are
decisions being
made?"

So what gets prioritized?



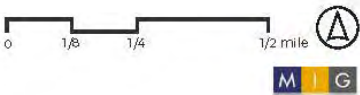
Where will investments be most impactful and visible?



Downtown Albany Strategy

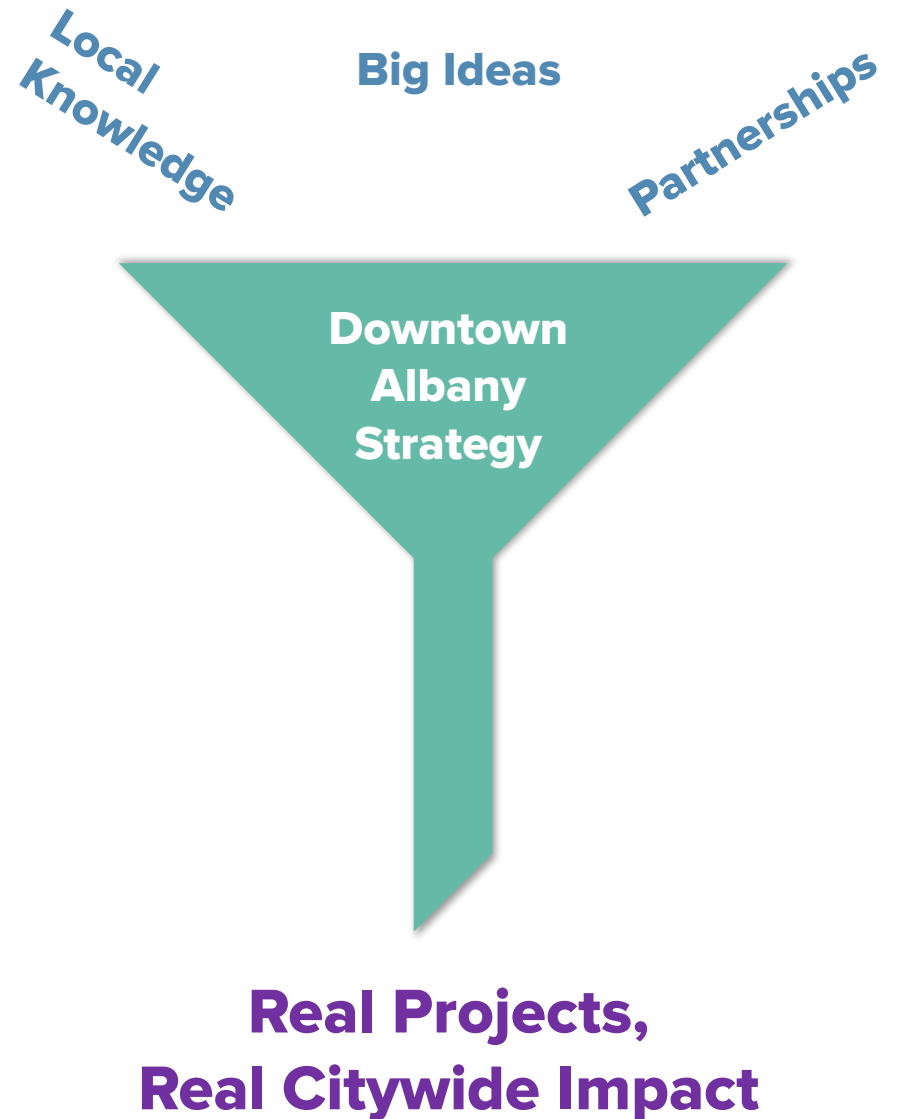
LEGEND

- New York State Capitol
- One-Mile Radius
- Park
- Water
- Rail Line
- Highway



What will the plan deliver?

- Catalytic projects and investments
- Coordinated public programs and policies to unlock private investment
- An actionable blueprint targeting key areas and sites



Work is happening in three phases



PHASE 1:
**GROWTH TARGETS
& FRAMEWORK**

*Develop Criteria for
Investments*

June → August*



PHASE 2:
**CATALYTIC PROJECT
IDENTIFICATION**

*Filter, Prioritize, and
Bundle Investments*

August → October*



PHASE 3:
**IMPLEMENTATION
AND GOVERNANCE**

*Develop Implementation
Strategy*

October → December*

**Estimated timeline*

...with many opportunities to engage and inform



**Public
Engagement
Process**



**Public Workshops
Focus Groups
Pop Ups
Door to Door Visits with
Business Owners
Website
Newsletters
Social Media**



**Clarify
Investment
Priorities**



Good Things are Happening in Albany

Albany is a city of promise and potential. As the capital of New York State and part of a strong, growing region, it has unique assets—but Downtown has long faced challenges. Fragmented development, public safety concerns, and high commercial vacancies have limited its ability to thrive.

To change this, Governor Hochul launched the **Championing Albany's Potential (CAP) Initiative**, a State-led effort backed by a historic \$400 million investment to revitalize the downtown core of Albany.

The **Downtown Albany Strategy** is a key part of this effort: a strategic public process to shape a blueprint for downtown revitalization. The Strategy will focus on tangible, high-impact projects that improve economic vibrancy, housing, public safety, and quality of life—while aligning public programs and unlocking private investment.

Led by Empire State Development (ESD), CAP includes \$200 million to plan and implement projects that reinvigorate commercial corridors, grow housing, support small businesses, and transform underutilized properties and public spaces.

It is designed to help diversify Albany's economic base, attract and retain residents and businesses, and deliver visible results.

Once complete, the Strategy will:

- Deliver catalytic projects and investments
- Align public programs and policies to unlock private investment





SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS



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Small Group Discussions

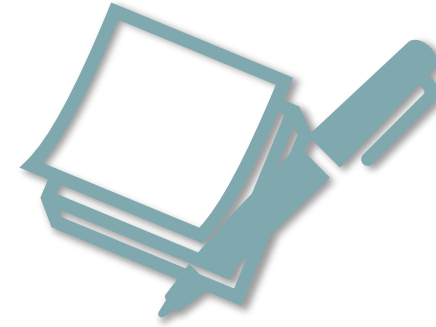
1. **What positive changes should occur through investment in downtown?**
2. **Where should downtown investment and growth be concentrated first?
(Use your map to specify locations)**
3. **If we evolve and grow with purpose, what do downtown and Albany look like in five or ten years?**

Moderators will be walking around the room to help answer questions and help engage discussions.

Before you get started



1. Introduce yourselves



2. Everyone, grab a pen and post its.
Write your ideas on post its and
mark up the large map.



3. Assign a scribe to
capture discussion



4. Make sure all post its are
attached to the map. We will
collect these at the end

Small Group Discussions

1. What positive changes should occur through investment in downtown?
2. Where should downtown investment and growth be concentrated first?
(Use your map to specify locations)
3. If we evolve and grow with purpose, what do downtown and Albany look like in five or ten years?

Moderators will be walking around the room to help answer questions and help engage discussions.

Thank you for your engagement!

What happens next? And how to stay involved:

- Your input will be shared back
- Visit **www.downtownalbanystrategy.com**
- Online questionnaire
- Launch of Phase 2: Project Definition



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