

Public Workshop #1 - Overview

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- Opening remarks from Co-Chair
- NY Forward Overview Presentation
 - Public Q&A
- Breakout Activity
 - Walking tours of Mohawk Ave and Schonowee Ave
 - Comments on present & ideas for future
 - Sharing thoughts on vision and goals
- Group Discussion



Comments on the present and ideas for the future

Who was there?

- About **21** Participants
- State team
 - NY DOS: Gina Dabiere-Gibbs, Matt Smith
- Consultant Team
 - Buro Happold: Ashley Dominguez, Isabel Mulay
 - Interboro: Daniel D'Oca, Kate Chapman, Doris Qingyi Duanmu
 - EDR: Aidan McKibbin



Walking Tour







Key Findings

1. Pedestrian safety and comfort on Mohawk Avenue emerged as the dominant issue.
2. The parks and waterfront are tremendous assets, but they feel disconnected from the business core.
3. There is considerable support for new housing and infill development, but also a desire for flexibility.
4. Revitalizing the business core requires both better buildings and more reasons to be downtown.
5. Scotia's identity and historic character could be more explicit in the goals.
6. Sustainability and resiliency should encompass the whole downtown, not only the waterfront.

1

Pedestrian safety and comfort on Mohawk Avenue emerged as the dominant issue.

Comments on the present

- Mohawk Avenue feels more like a fast through-road than a walkable main street.
- Traffic speed, truck volume, long gaps between crossings, wide curb radii, broad driveways, and unclear parking all make the street feel vehicle-oriented rather than people-oriented.
- Participants recalled past pedestrian fatalities near Scotia Cinema and Collins Street and described truck traffic as a major source of discomfort.

• Ideas for the future

- Calm traffic, add more visible and frequent crossings, build curb extensions, clarify parking lanes, improve sidewalks and ADA access, and expand street tree canopy for shade.
- Reduce the number and width of driveway openings by linking rear parking areas where feasible

• Implication

- Goal 4 could more clearly emphasize safety and accessibility as core elements of walkability, reflecting public comments that framed these needs as just as important as beautification or connectivity.

2 The parks and waterfront are tremendous assets, but they feel disconnected from the business core.

Comments on the present

- Collins Park and Freedom Park already attract large crowds for concerts, water skiing, fireworks, fishing, sports, and other activities.
- Few visitors continue into the Mohawk Avenue business district, and the Route 50/bridge area was repeatedly described as a physical and psychological barrier.

• Ideas for the future

- Improve water access by adding a kayak and canoe launch.
- Strengthen connections between parks, waterfront activities, and downtown businesses by creating a safer, more inviting walk to restaurants, shops, and other destinations.

• Implication

- Goal 3 could more clearly highlight the importance of linking Scotia's cultural and recreational destinations with the rest of downtown, reflecting how participants described these places as part of a connected experience.
- Goal 4 could more explicitly acknowledge the pedestrian and bicycle connections needed to support that vision, aligning with public comments about making these destinations easier and safer to reach.

3 There is considerable support for new housing and infill development, but also a desire for flexibility.

Comments on the present

- Many vacant, underused, or “missing-tooth” sites could support new housing or mixed-use development along Mohawk Avenue.
- Scotia Manor Apartments were cited as a strong example of multifamily housing that fits well within the village and supports downtown activity.

• Ideas for the future

- Build additional multifamily housing downtown that reflects the scale and character of Scotia Manor.
- Allow flexibility in ground-floor uses so that new buildings aren’t required to include commercial space when demand is uncertain.
- Reintroduce three- and four-story mixed-use buildings that echo the historic scale and character of Mohawk Avenue

• Implication

- Goal 1 could continue to support mixed-use development while also signaling that other forms of housing are valuable. Public comments pointed to opportunities for infill, adaptive reuse, context-sensitive density, and active downtown development, with ground-floor commercial uses included where they make sense.

4

Revitalizing the business core requires both better buildings and more reasons to be downtown.

Comments on the present

- Participants frequently pointed to façade conditions, vacant storefronts, and underutilized buildings—especially along Mohawk Avenue.
- Opinions varied on whether Scotia has a parking shortage, but many described confusion about where parking is allowed, discomfort using curbside spaces because of fast traffic and trucks, and poorly organized parking lots.

• Ideas for the future

- Reinforce the business core through rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, new housing, and mixed-use redevelopment.
- Attract destinations—restaurants, shops, arts-oriented businesses, and other places that encourage people to linger downtown.
- Connect and reorganize rear parking areas and improve striping; calmer traffic on Mohawk Avenue would make existing parking feel more usable.

• Implication

- Goal 2 could address vacancy, building reuse, business attraction, and activation of the street, in addition to façade improvements.

5 Scotia's identity and historic character should be more explicit in the goals.

Comments on the present

- Participants highlighted places that define Scotia's identity—Scotia Cinema, the library, historic buildings along Mohawk Avenue, the waterfront, and long-standing local businesses.
- Scotia Cinema was repeatedly described as a beloved landmark and key part of Village history.
- Participants noted the loss of historic plaques.

• Ideas for the future

- Preserve character buildings and incorporate recognizable elements of Scotia's historic architecture into new development.
- Enhance façades, add public art or a mural, and promote Scotia Cinema's historic significance.
- Make Scotia's history more visible through public art, gateway features, historical signage, and design improvements that help the Village feel like a distinct place rather than a pass-through corridor.

• Implication

- Historic character and community identity could either become an additional goal or be incorporated more clearly into Goals 2 and 3, reflecting how strongly these themes came through in public comments.

6 Sustainability and resiliency should encompass the whole downtown, not only the waterfront.

Comments on the present

- Although sustainability came up less often than safety or economic development, comments were specific—stormwater management, drainage, flood risk, street trees and shade, native plantings, and green infrastructure.
- Schonowee Ave drew particular attention because of its flood history and existing multifamily housing.

• Ideas for the future

- Install rain gardens and swales to reduce pressure on the stormwater system
- Expand tree canopy for shade and pedestrian comfort.
- Encourage future redevelopment on Schonowee Ave that provides flood-resilient housing and takes advantage of proximity to the public waterfront.

• Implication

- Goal 5 could more clearly link green infrastructure with stormwater management, tree canopy, climate comfort, and flood-resilient development—as well as waterfront access—reflecting how participants described sustainability as a practical, whole-downtown concern.

Location: Mohawk and Sacandaga

Comment

"I walk up Sacandaga to avoid crossing at this intersection because it is too dangerous."

Idea

"The pedestrian signals should be updated to align with the traffic light's right turn signal."



Location: Mohawk and N Reynolds



Comment

"This area is weirdly empty."



Idea

"There are mixed-use redevelopment opportunities here!"



Location: Converge Community Church



Comment

"This building is vacant. It used to be a bowling alley."



Idea

"There's potential for a community area!"



Location: Scotia Cinema

Comment

"Some visitors park in the diner parking lot when visiting the cinema because there is not always enough parking in the back of the cinema."

Idea

"Add a raised mid-block crossing for connectivity!"



Location: Vacant lot near NibblexNosh



Comment

"Empty lot!"



Idea

"Infill empty lot! If a building is not feasible then how about a pocket park."



Location: Mohawk Ave near Library



Comment

"No curb cuts here. This precludes people with limited mobility from going to the park."



Idea

"Prioritize accessibility and connectivity in streetscape design."



Location: Gateway Bridge

Comment

"This is a 4-lane highway that divides Scotia. The main business district is west of Collins St and then there is the Park area to the East"

Idea

"Add a landscaped median to create a gateway to village. This will also calm traffic and provide refuge to pedestrians crossing."



Location: Schonowee Ave



Comment

"Collins Park is wonderful!"



Idea

"We should add an additional crosswalk and adjustable bollards for event safety."



Engagement by the numbers

Topic	Written	Verbal	Combined
Pedestrian Safety & Infrastructure	47	40	87
Streets & Traffic	15	52	67
Parks, Recreation & Public Space	10	52	62
Housing & Development	15	45	60
Business & Downtown Activity	21	35	56
Trees, Landscaping & Sustainability	28	27	55
Waterfront & Connections	24	11	35
Character, History & Identity	12	6	18
Total	172	268	440

Overall Takeaways

- The workshop largely validated the direction of the vision and all five preliminary goals.
- The LPC might consider refining the goals to make them more specific to Scotia.
- The LPC could consider adding a goal specifically referencing historic character.
- The five goals are not separate silos. On the walking tour, participants pictured a revitalized downtown where housing, businesses, walkability, recreation, character, and sustainability all work together as one connected system.



We want to hear more!

