

**Lincoln Avenue Brownfield Opportunity Area
Community Participation Plan**

Revised January 25, 2019

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This document was prepared for the Town of Colonie Industrial Development Agency (IDA) and the NYS Department of State, Communities & Waterfronts Division with State funds provided through the Brownfields Opportunity Area Program.

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Colonie Industrial Development Agency (IDA)

REVITALIZATION PLAN PHASE II

Town of Colonie, Albany County, NY

Community Participation and Outreach Strategy

1.0 Introduction

This document presents a plan for stakeholder involvement in the inventory, analysis, evaluation, and formulation of a Nomination Study for the Lincoln Avenue Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) hereinafter referred to as the “Lincoln Avenue Revitalization Plan Phase II” BOA. The proposed plan is designed to engage the interest and participation of a broad cross-section of the community and surrounding neighborhoods throughout the planning process, and engender a level of communication and openness between all involved parties and the public. It is clearly recognized that public input is critical to gaining information about the study area and specific sites, and to help foster a comprehensive plan for the revitalization and future sustainability of this area around Lincoln Avenue.

The resulting planning study will suggest tangible actions that will be implemented by both public and private entities and be potentially funded under future grant applications. This proposed plan is consistent with the requirements of the New York State Department of State, Communities and Waterfronts Division (DOS) and the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) regarding public involvement in the planning process and an environmental evaluation of the Nomination Study Area.

The Lincoln Avenue Revitalization Plan Phase II BOA Nomination Study area will encompass a roughly 350-acre area that is focused primarily on former industrial uses, some commercial, and existing residential around Lincoln Avenue.

There are three primary components to be included in the Nomination Study for the study area as detailed below:

1. Project Description Boundary and existing conditions analysis
2. Public Participation Plan Techniques
3. Analysis of the site-specific Opportunity Areas

The anticipated outcomes for the project are as follows:

1. Comprehensive land use assessment and analysis within defined BOA boundaries
2. Identification and thorough description of all brownfield and underutilized or vacant sites
3. A detailed economic and market analysis to assist in evaluating realistic redevelopment potential and reuse scenarios
4. An analysis of necessary infrastructure to accommodate development and reuse concept
5. A strategic and marketable Nomination Plan that serves as the basis for the Implementation Phase

When complete, it is recommended that the Town of Colonie adopt this plan as a guide for planning and zoning decisions in Colonie.

The team of Barton & Loguidice and Camoin Associates are the planning consultants assisting the Town on the Lincoln Avenue Revitalization Plan Phase II BOA study.

2.0 Scope and Considerations for Ongoing Discussions

In working toward a process for sound public participation, the following should be considered:

1. The Steering Committee (SC) should have clearly defined objectives.
2. What are the common goals with the Albany County Commercial Transportation Access Study (2002), Route 32 Linkage Study (2011), and the Town of Colonie Comprehensive Plan (2005 & 2017)?
3. The extent to which SC and volunteers can be relied upon in carrying out public participation?
4. The extent to which SC members of the project committees wish to involve themselves in public participation events outside of programmed meetings.
5. Locations, appropriate time of day, conveniences, and logistics for public meetings.

3.0 Organization Review and Finalization of the Public Participation Plan

During the project's startup phase to the consultant team will facilitate a meeting with the Steering Committee. The purpose of this meeting is to refine and revise the identified objectives outlined in Section 4.0 below for both the current process of developing and adopting the Nomination Study and for long-term revitalization and future marketability of the area. Following the SC review of the public participation plan, the preliminary draft will be revised and provided to the SC, DOS, and Colonie IDA.

4.0 Draft Objectives for Public Involvement

The following draft objectives are set forth by B&L's planning staff:

- The public should recognize the importance of the Nomination Study as a Revitalization Plan to guide future planning and zoning decisions in the eastern Industrial area of Colonie.
- The outreach effort should be designed to engage a full range of stakeholders in the community including residents, business owners, elected representatives, and adjoining municipalities.
- The public should have notification of and easy access to project technical information, maps, and analyses. The maps should include DEC Zones 1, 2 and 3 and an explanation thereof.
- All involved agencies, including the Town, should serve as a conduit throughout the process of the analysis, evaluation, and Nomination process (including SEQRA).
- The SC should strive to solicit input from the broadest possible range of perspectives and interests in the community.
- Input should be solicited through a variety of technical and non-technical means and should be carefully considered and responded to in a timely manner.
- The public participation process should be approached in a way that enfranchises local residents and strengthens the sense of community.
- Public participation should further the vision of the community and the updated Comprehensive Plan; enhance civic pride, and encourage future participation in the long-range decision making process for each area.
- The public should be encouraged to actively participate in the project and be given conduits to offer information, advice and input.

5.0 Committee Involvement in Public Participation

In order to maximize the project budget and to provide for grassroots support of the process, the SC should maximize the amount of volunteerism available from community groups and stakeholders in the study area. This is necessary to create a network of communication in order to engage the public in an objective manner and minimize biased or preconceived perceptions of the project. It will be important to provide these volunteers with a clear understanding of the purposes, goals, schedule, tasks and objectives of the project.

Initiation of the Nomination Study will be governed by a Steering Committee to include members of the consultant team, key stakeholders identified, IDA representatives, residents within the project area, representatives from the Town of Colonie, City of Watervliet, and Village of Menands, and representatives from NYS DOS. The Steering Committee will maintain direct liaison to the planning consultant through meetings, general communications and through contact with the identified IDA BOA project manager (Joe LaCivita). Mr. LaCivita will coordinate all activities with the SC, the Lincoln Avenue Revitalization Plan Phase II Consultants, and SC. The primary project SC will be composed of stakeholders in the project area that will assist the planning consultant in enlisting community members and volunteers from local organizations. The intent is to include a grassroots perspective in all public outreach by enlisting local property owners to assist in securing cooperation of the media and newspapers (See Appendix 1), and to put a neighborhood viewpoint into press releases, newsletters,

and workshops. The extent to which volunteer assistance will be solicited will be determined by the SC within the context of available resources, budget, and volunteer capabilities of IDA leaders.

Note: Care will be taken to ensure that all property owners are advised in advance of the display of project mapping that may show their parcel as part of “open space.”

An important component of the SC will be recording and disseminating meeting minutes from all SC meetings. The project consultant will coordinate distribution of agenda, meeting minutes and any other related information. The role of the project consultant in this context will be to develop a public record of the planning process and public sessions. General meeting minutes will be provided to the SC for finalization, conversion to digital documents and included on the project web site.

The consultant team will meet monthly at a minimum, with meetings possibly occurring every three weeks on an as need basis to review and discuss new project information and draft reports, with the SC during the project. Up to twelve (12) meetings will be scheduled over the course of the project. A draft schedule will be established for review which will identify approximate timeframes for committee meetings. The consultant team will issue meeting agenda prior to each meeting.

During the initial SC meetings, the consultant team will assist in developing a list of potential new SC members from the community. The consultant team will prepare and issue an invitation letter to the potential members identified by the SC.

6.0 Community Participation and Outreach Strategy

The consultant team will assist the SC with community meetings and will seek input from stakeholders as follows:

1. The consultant team will provide templates and draft documents to publicize the project and announce meetings both in paper and digital form that will include the following:
 - a. Advertisement for local newsletters
 - b. Invitations
 - c. Announcement flyers
 - d. Comment mailers
 - e. Press releases
 - f. Project website updates
 - g. Social media (Twitter and Facebook; SC will approve social media guidelines for consultant team to follow.)

2. The consultant team will assist the SC in hosting community meetings as follows:
 - a. All meetings will be held in a public space, centrally located near the project area. The Schuyler Heights Fire District or Colonie Elks Club would provide suitable and centralized sites; however, alternative sites should also be investigated. The consultant team will

provide agendas, mapping, graphic pens, markers, note pads, tracing paper and a digital projector for use in the workshops. A PowerPoint presentation will be provided for each of the community meetings/visioning sessions. Graphic products of workshops will be provided in digital form. All materials will be made available for posting as links on the project web page.

- b. A Public Information Meeting will be held to introduce the BOA projects to the public and provide a brainstorming session to direct future meeting efforts for the BOA project.
 - c. Two visioning sessions during which community stakeholders will participate in 'hands-on' development of revitalization strategies. The visioning sessions will be held with the SC both before and after the Public Information Meeting (PIM), in the Schuyler Heights Fire District or at the Elks Club. Visioning Session 2 is intended to permit refinement and further development of ideas generated in the first Visioning Session. Thus, the process is: 1.) The team will solicit preliminary ideas from the SC about the vision for the BOA before the Public Information Meeting. 2.) The same will be solicited from the public at the PIM. 3.) The consultant team will refine the Vision statement based on these two sets of comments, then share these with the SC at a follow-up meeting.
 - d. A follow-up Public Information Meeting will be held to provide for public review and comment on the draft Nomination Study Technical Memorandum #1. This draft Technical Memorandum will provide the basis for developing the final Nomination study and plan. Space/room reservation, refreshments, and supplemental transportation for the public meetings/visioning sessions will be the responsibility of the IDA.
3. In addition to formal public sessions, the public should be encouraged to attend regular meetings of the SC and be permitted to provide comment during a designated time to be indicated in the meeting agenda. SC meeting notices will be placed on the project web site by the consultant.
 4. The outreach effort for public workshops should include the following:
 - a. Coverage in the Albany Times Union should promote an understanding of the Lincoln Avenue Revitalization Plan Phase II BOA program, provide information on the proposed project schedule, and promote upcoming community workshops. Coverage should include contact information for the SC and information regarding participation (i.e., what can residents, businesses, and stakeholders do to participate). Coverage should also include venues the public can utilize in order to stay informed of progress through:
 - i. Newspaper and web coverage
 - ii. Libraries
 - iii. Local businesses
 - iv. Local organizations and community groups
 - v. Project website hosted by B&L
 - vi. Flyers posted in schools, churches, stores, and other community centers

- vii. Flyers in municipal tax bills
- b. Web-based information will be a key component to public outreach. The project website: www.bartonandloguidice.com/Colonieboa.htm will be developed consistent with the City's established project web site format. The consultant team will update the project website as needed.
- c. Long-term outreach can be initiated by generating a computerized mailing list to any organization within the project area (or regional organizations with an interest in the outcome). Organizations to be added to the list should include:
 - i. Churches
 - ii. Schools
 - iii. Senior organizations
 - iv. Chambers of Commerce
 - v. Other organizations identified by the SC.
 - vi. The list should include the name and address of every parcel owner in the BOA area. Key gathering locations should be identified for local postings. Mailings should be prepared prior to the initial media coverage and should follow the first article by three weeks' time (following the initial coverage).
- d. Articles and editorials by local stakeholders should be encouraged in advance of each workshop. These articles should provide background on the issues being considered, outline opportunities for written and verbal participation, and indicate where technical and other background information can be viewed by the public.
- e. Public service announcements prepared by the consultant team should be scheduled for both radio and television to highlight the public visioning sessions.
- f. Attendance by the project consultants at identified public and civic organizational meetings, events, festivals and special occasions that may occur across the community throughout the duration of the project. The purpose of this activity will be to introduce the Lincoln Avenue Revitalization Plan Phase II project to these groups and seek direct information from these establish community organizations about issues important to them in the downtown area. The consultant team will keep meeting notes and provide summaries to the SC and for posting on the project web site.
- g. Developer's Roundtable Workshop will be conducted by the consultant team once preliminary data collection and analysis has been completed. The purpose of this Roundtable will be to directly engage local and regional commercial and residential developers (public and private institutions) and individuals experienced with re-development in the Town of Colonie as well as Albany County. A list of potential participants will be identified and developed by the SC.
- h. A Mobile Project Information Workshop will be conducted by the consultant team on an as needed basis and to targeted, pre-identified events where large gatherings 10 of the public are expected to attend. The purpose of these mobile shops will be to provide information to the public about the Lincoln Avenue Revitalization Plan Phase II project and to solicit basic information from the public about the project area around Lincoln Avenue.

- i. Public workshops should be promoted as community events and have been targeted for convenient evenings. These workshops should be carried out with enthusiasm and should be forward-looking and forward-thinking. If possible, workshops should not coincide with other events in the area unless it can be held and sponsored by an appropriate group with a strong, unbiased local presence. Workshops will be held in the Schuyler Heights Fire District or at the Colonie Elks Club.
- j. Planning for each workshop must have clear objectives and each session should be formatted to achieve stated objectives. Each workshop should begin with a 15-20 minute presentation, aided by PowerPoint slideshows, that explains the context of the area, provides information and planning trends that may serve as revitalization tools, and sets forth questions and issues. The presentation will be done through visual means and will include speakers, panel discussions, or some combination thereof. Depending upon the level of attendance, break-out sessions should be programmed with groups of 8-10 individuals in order to conduct dialogue, engage individuals, and develop consensus. Each group will have one member of the SC available to write down group priorities and identify points of agreement to be addressed as the process continues.
- k. Workshop notes from flipcharts will be compiled and included in follow-up summaries prepared by the consultant team and to be available for public review and comment at Town Hall.

Upon completion of the participation plan outlined above, and preceding the official Nomination Adoption Process, public displays for Town Hall, local libraries, and popular public spaces should be reproduced to explain the evolution of the sub-area plans and the planning process. The intent is to make clear to the public that the revitalization strategy is grounded in public support, is realistic, and is marketable.

The preliminary list of stakeholders slated for one on one and group interviews with the consultant teams is as follows:

Municipal Leaders

Town of Colonie

Colonie Fire Departments

City of Watervliet

Village of Menands

Businesses

Luizzi Brothers – Michael Alex, Peter Luizzi

Jim Merkle – Albany County Transportation Dept.

Tim Alund – Adirondack Steel

Streck's Inc. owners

Project Area Residents and Property Owners

Cemetery associations

Other Potential Local Stakeholders

Valentie Gravel
Reo Welding
Casale Excavating
LWA Works
SKS Bottle & Packaging

New Penn
Clemente Cement
Storage Facilities
Burt Crane & Rigging

Institutional Stakeholders

New York State Department of State Division of Communities and Waterfronts
New York State Department of Transportation

7.0 The Adoption Process

The consultant team will prepare a draft Full Environmental Assessment Form as part of the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) Act requirements. Since Nomination does not require invasive project work or remediation, the SEQR forms are expected to be prepared for the general area development and will provide a framework for individual project filings that may be required in the future. This process will identify significant threatened and endangered species, cultural resources and other significant environmental issues that will require additional evaluation during subsequent BOA implementation phases.

The consultant team will review and incorporate comments received from the public, community stakeholders, and the SC for the draft study, and will prepare the Final Nomination Study for review and comment by all involved parties.

The consultant team will submit the final Study to the Town Board and the DOS for review. If requested, B&L will present the results of the Nomination Study to the Town Board at a scheduled meeting.

Following acceptance of the Nomination Study by DOS, B&L will submit a request to the DOS to modify the State Assistance Contract and move onto Step 3 of the BOA nomination process.

8.0 Conclusion

This Public Participation Plan is in draft form for review by the Colonie IDA, New York State Department of State and members of the SC. Following a review, this Public Participation Plan will be returned to the consultant team with review comments. The consultant team will revise and return the document to the City as a guide for the planning process and a methodology for maximizing public participation.

We recommend that the final document be distributed to the SC at a monthly meeting to generate discussion and determine the number of designated members of each subcommittee interested in

working on public outreach or participating in organizing public workshops. We also recommend that during the next meeting, the group develop a consensus as to strategy and responsibility for the initial steps.

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APPENDIX 1

PUBLICATIONS AND MEDIA OUTLETS IN THE COLONIE AREA

Recommended AM radio media stations:

- WWSC 1450 AM: Talk and news
- WGDJ (W254DA) AM Talk
- WABY AM Standards based in Watervliet

Recommended FM radio media stations:

- WAMC - 90.3 FM Northeast public radio station
- W226AC (WAMC) - 93.1 FM Northeast public radio based in Troy
- WGY - 810 AM and 103.1 FM Breaking news, traffic, and weather in the Capital Region
- WVCR - 88.3 FM The Siena College radio station run by students

Recommended Cable/TV media stations:

6 (6)	WRGB	CBS	Schenectady, NY	Sinclair Broadcast Group	DTV Ch. 6 (1806)
10 (10)	WTEN	ABC	Albany, NY	Nexstar Media Group	DTV Ch. 26 (1810)
13 (13)	WNYT	NBC	Albany, NY	Hubbard Broadcasting	DTV Ch. 12 (1813)
17 (11)	WMHT	PBS	Schenectady, NY	WMHT Educational Telecommunications	DTV Ch. 34 (1811)
23 (8)	WXXA-TV	FOX	Albany, NY	Shield Media (operated by WTEN/Nexstar Media Group)	DTV Ch. 7 (1808)

Also, Channel 9 on [Spectrum News](#) in the town is a Public-access television station devoted to town news, programming, and events. The studios are located inside the William K. Sanford town library on Albany Shaker Road.

Recommended Newspapers:

Times Union

Troy Record

Schenectady Gazette

The Capital District Spotlight

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APPENDIX 2

Project Location & BOA Boundary Map

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APPENDIX 3

Lincoln Avenue Revitalization Plan Phase II BOA Steering Committee

Name	Association	Phone	Email
Charles Voss	Barton & Loguidice	518-218-1801	cvoss@bartonandloguidice.com
Amy Spain	Barton & Loguidice	518-218-1801	aspain@bartonandloguidice.com
Katelyn Reepmeyer	Town of Colonie	518-867-3370	reepmeyerk@colonie.org
John Dzialo	Town of Colonie	518-783-2758	dzialoj@colonie.org
Charles Patricelli	City of Watervliet	518-378-4051	cpatrice@watervliet.com
Dave Wheatley	City of Watervliet	518-270-3800 X 103	dwheatley@watervliet.com
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Rebekah Kennedy	Town of Colonie	518-783-2841	kennedyrn@colonie.org
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Tim Alund	Adirondack Steel		
Joe LaCivita	Town of Colonie	518-783-2741	LaCivita@colonie.org
Bethany Meys	Comoin Associates	518-899-2608	bethany@camoinassociates.com
Christa Franzi	Comoin Associates	518-899-2608	christa@camoinassociates.com
Patrice Courtney-Strong	Courtney Strong, Inc.	845-331-2238	pat@courtneystrong.com
David MacLeod	NYS DOT	(518) 474-4949	David.MacLeod@dos.ny.gov

Project Web Site: [www.bartonandloguidice.com/Lincoln Avenueboa.htm](http://www.bartonandloguidice.com/LincolnAvenueboa.htm)

APPENDIX 4

Local, State, and Federal Contacts

The following information is intended to provide a list of local, state and federal officials and agency contacts that are or will be participating in the development and review of the Lincoln Avenue Revitalization Plan Phase II Nomination Study.

Town of Colonie IDA

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New York State Department of State (DOS)

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New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC)

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