Final Report

Downtown Albany Planning and Feasibility Study

Prepared for

Empire State Development

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Downtown Albany Planning and Feasibility Study

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Appendix A - 2010 Boundary Survey

Appendix B - 2008 Albany Convention Center Facility and District Master Plan
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Appendix C - 2008 Albany Convention Center Facility and District Master Plan
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Appendix D - 2008 Topographic Survey

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Appendix F - 2012 Hartgen Archaeological Data Recovery and Construction
Monitoring Plan, Phase 1B Survey
  • August 7, 2007 NYSOPRHP Letter
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Appendix G - 2008 Preliminary Geotechnical Report & Soil Borings

Appendix H - 2010 E-Comm Square Building Assessment

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Appendix J - 2010 Pre Demolition Asbestos Containing Materials Survey
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Appendix P - 2010 Feasibility Study Relocation of Interceptor Sewer and Water
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Redevelopment Summary

CHA was commissioned by Empire State Development (ESD) to prepare a Feasibility Study to assess the potential for redevelopment of approximately 8 acres in Downtown Albany. The sub consultants that supported CHA included the Hamlin Design Group, KB Engineering & Consulting, LLC, TL Metzger & Associates, LLC, and BJH Advisors LLC.

The Downtown Albany Planning and Feasibility Study was prepared in support of ESD’s mission which is “to promote a vigorous and growing state economy, encourage business investment and job creation, and support diverse, prosperous local economies across New York State throughout the efficient use of loans, grants, tax credits, real estate development and marketing”. The primary tasks that were undertaken included:

- Confirming the existing conditions of buildings and infrastructure
- Preparing conceptual scenarios for redevelopment
- Identifying infrastructure improvements required to support redevelopment
- Determining the feasibility for redevelopment
- Developing strategic recommendations for advancing redevelopment

The following Guiding Principles were tested and refined as the project progressed to completion:

- Support sustainable economic growth within downtown
- Enhance the transition into downtown and adjoining neighborhoods and not a stand-alone development
- Promote a mix of uses, scale and densities that support live, work and play
- Promote walkable streets that strengthen the connections to downtown and adjoining neighborhoods
- Respect the scale and massing of Broadway Row
- Minimize major utility relocations
- Provide the appropriate building setbacks that allow for adequate width of sidewalk areas that promote active street life
- Encourage design of building entrances that support the scale and activity along the street
- Avoid interruption of the main street corridor with access points into parking and or delivery
- Enhance gateways and sense of arrival for both the pedestrian and vehicular traveler
- Encourage the use of building materials and architectural articulation at the street level that define urban form and scale
- Through design promote redevelopment that is pedestrian oriented and one that supports active street life
- Avoid blank building walls that do not provide an active interface with the street and the pedestrian
- Architectural massing that responds to the cues of the existing neighborhood while looking toward the future
- Design that reinforces a sense of community with scale and materials while providing diversity of building use and composition to provide a sense of organic urban development.

Two (2) redevelopment scenarios were prepared for the entire study area and further evaluated on a city block level. A total of seven (7) blocks make up the study area and they are defined by their location within the existing street grid or their commonality with building(s) that make up the particular block.

Study Area Location

The study area is comprised of 53 tax parcels, 5 vacant buildings totaling approximately 8 acres in the heart of the City’s Central Business District. As depicted in Figure 1 the study area is generally bordered by Hudson Avenue to the North, Broadway to the East, Green Street to the West and the elevated Empire State Plaza Arterial to the South. The study area includes 29 lots that are owned by the State of New York, 21 privately owned lots that are leased to the State of New York that would be acquired, and 3 lots that are privately owned that the State would also acquire. The redevelopment plan also includes Liberty Park and street right of ways controlled by the City of Albany. 48 Hudson, which is owned by Historic Albany Foundation would remain as privately held. For the purposes of preparing the study the existing conditions, opportunities and concepts were evaluated on a block by block level that make up the overall redevelopment plan. Figure 2. A full scale boundary survey is included in Appendix A.

Guiding Principles

The goal for preparing the study was to determine the feasibility for redevelopment in this area of downtown with a focus on optimizing growth opportunities that support a sustainable land use, economy, business investment, and job creation. To achieve this vision and guide the preparation of the Downtown Albany and Planning Feasibility Study, the project team created a set of Guiding Principles.
Prior Studies and Plans

In 2006 this 8 acre area was selected by the Albany Convention Center Authority as the preferred location for constructing a Convention Center and Hotel. As part of the environmental approval process the Authority authorized the preparation of the Convention Center Facility & District Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS). Appendix B. The DGEIS evaluated the impacts associated with a project that included a 400,000 sf convention center, 400 room full service hotel and 1,000 car parking garage all located within the current study area Figures 3 and 4. In May of 2008 the Convention center Authority completed the Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement and in June of 2008 a Findings Statement was prepared completing the State Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process.

In support of the DGEIS/FGEIS and potential development of the area extensive studies were completed which evaluated existing site and building conditions. These include:

- 2007 Phase 1A Literature review and Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment
- 2007 Dry Utility System Report and Survey
- 2008 Albany Convention center Facility & District Master Plan draft Environmental Impact
- 2008 Transportation Impact Study
- 2008 Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering Report
- 2008 Property, Topographic and Utility Survey
- 2010 Preliminary Study-Albany Intermodal Center
- 2010 Feasibility Assessment for Relocation of 54 inch Interceptor Sewer
- 2010 E-Comm Square building Condition Assessment
- 2010 Pre Demolition Asbestos Containing Materials Survey Trail Ways Bus Terminal
- 2010 Pre Demolition Asbestos Containing Materials Survey E-Comm Square

A majority of the technical information included in these documents is still relevant and will be referred to as part of the Downtown Albany Planning & Feasibility Study. Where required information from previous studies was updated to reflect current conditions. The DGEIS, FGEIS and supporting technical studies are included in the Appendix.

Other information reviewed included:

- 2011 Zimmerman/Volk Residential Study
- 2013 Feasibility Study for Albany Attraction- Omni Development
- 2015 Impact Albany
- 2017 Rezone Albany

With the recession of 2008-2009 construction of the Convention Center and Hotel at this location was put on hold. In 2012 a new site in downtown Albany at the intersection of Eagle and Howard Street was identified for locating what is now referred to as the Albany Capital Center. Opened in March of 2017, the 5 story Albany Capital Center includes two levels of meeting space totaling 82,000 sf space over 3 levels of parking.
Land Use and Zoning

With the exception of the four buildings that make up E-Comm Square, the former Trail Ways Bus Station and 48 Hudson Avenue the study area is dominated by paved surface parking lots. These surface lots include approximately 750 off street parking spaces. There is also approximately 70 on street metered parking spaces within the study area. The grid pattern of City streets within the study area include Green, Dallius, Division, Hamilton, Liberty and Pruyn. The existing street pavement, curbing and sidewalks are all in a deteriorated condition. Land uses immediately adjoining the study area to the East along Broadway include a mix of office, retail and residential on the upper floors of 4 story structures within this corridor. All of the structures including E-Comm Square, the former Trail Ways Bus Station and 48 Hudson Avenue are currently vacant and are in various stages of deterioration.

Bordering the study area to the North the land use is dominated by the 4 level 900 space parking garage on Hudson Avenue operated by Albany Parking Authority. The Hudson Avenue corridor in this area also includes 48 Hudson Avenue also referred to as the Van Ostrande-Radcliff House and small green space known as Liberty Park both dating back to the 18th century. To the south the study area is bordered by the Greyhound Bus Station and the elevated Empire State Plaza Arterial which includes approximately 730 parking spaces underneath that are used by employees from the State of New York. To the west the study area is bordered by the South Pearl Street corridor which includes a mix of office, and retail uses with the Times Union Center as the primary anchor.

Mixed Use Downtown Central Business Zoning District

According to the City of Albany’s United Sustainable Development Ordinance (USDO) effective June 1, 2017 the study area lies entirely within the Mixed Use Downtown (MU-DT) Central Business Zoning District. The purpose of the Zoning District is to provide a wide variety of uses and encourage infill redevelopment while reinforcing the existing well defined urban character of Albany’s historic downtown area. The principal permitted uses generally include but not limited to the following:

- General Retail
- Convenience Retail
- Specialty Retail
- Residential
- Personal Business Services
- Higher Education Facility
- Cultural Facilities
- Office
- Parks
- Indoor Recreation or Entertainment
- Hotel
- Supermarkets
- Bed & Breakfasts
- Parking Garages
- Transit Facilities
- Restaurants & Taverns
- Artisan Manufacturing

The MU-DT Zoning District area lot, setbacks and building standards are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lot Width Minimum</th>
<th>Impervious Lot Coverage Maximum</th>
<th>Rear Yard Setback Minimum</th>
<th>Minimum Lot Depth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 ft</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0 ft</td>
<td>80 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impervious Lot Coverage Maximum</td>
<td>Minimum Lot Depth</td>
<td>Maximum Building Height</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 ft</td>
<td>80 ft</td>
<td>0 ft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The redevelopment plan being proposed in the Downtown Albany Planning and Feasibility Study will require compliance under Section 375-E (14) Major Development Plan Review of the City’s Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance.

It is applicable under the following:
- All new civic, institutional and commercial development with 10,000 square feet or more of gross floor area.
- New residential construction containing more than 4 units within a single lot.
- Conversions of existing non-residential structure to a residential use containing 20 or more dwelling units

Historic Overlay District

The study area also lies within the Fort orange/Downtown Albany Historic District therefore the redevelopment being proposed in the Downtown Albany Planning and Feasibility Study will require compliance under Section 375-E (17) and (19) of the City of Albany’s Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance - Major Certificate of Appropriateness. It applies to all permits involving alteration, restoration, reconstruction, demolition, and new construction. Application will be made to the City’s Chief planning official who will then forward on to the Historic Resources Commission for their review and decision.

Affordable Housing Requirements

New residential or mixed use development or redevelopment containing 50 or more new dwelling units shall set aside at least five percent of its new dwelling units at sales or prices affordable to persons earning no more than 100% of the area median household income for the City of Albany.

Topography: The topography of the study area is generally flat however there is a change in elevation across the area dropping in a west to east direction toward Broadway by approximately 9 feet. A full scale topographic survey is included in Appendix D.

Flood Plain Overlay District

In review of the Flood Insurance Rate Map dated March 16, 2015 panel number 36001C194D, the entire study area is located within Zone AE - Special Flood Hazard Area of the 100 year flood plain estimated to be approximately 20 feet MSL in elevation. Redevelopment within the study area will be required to comply with current City of Albany Floodplain Overlay District standards 375-2 (f)(3) FO under the Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance. Elevation standards for new and substantially improved construction within AE zones will need to comply with the requirements as follows:

Residential Structures: The lowest floor including basement elevated to or above one foot above the base flood elevation.

Non Residential Structures: The lowest floor including basement elevated to or above the base flood elevation or be flood proofed so that the structure is water tight below the base flood elevation including attendant utility and sanitary facilities, with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water. All structural components located below the base flood level must be capable of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and effects of buoyancy.

Compined Sewer Overlay District: The study area lies within the Combined Sewer Overlay district and will be required to comply with the requirements of section 375-2 (f) (4) of the City’s Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance.
The following summarizes the current ownership, acreage and land use of the seven (7) blocks that are included in the feasibility study area.

**Block 1**

Block 1, located on Hudson Avenue between Green and Dallius Streets, includes 13 tax map parcels totaling approximately 1.43 acres. Eleven parcels are privately owned and currently leased to the State of New York, 1 parcel is owned by the State of New York and the remaining parcel, which is 48 Hudson, is owned by Historic Albany Foundation and individually listed as a historic structure by the City of Albany Historic Resources Commission. 48 Hudson Avenue is currently unoccupied and undergoing restoration. Except for the structure at 48 Hudson Avenue the remaining area of Block 1 is currently being used as a paved surface parking lot. *Figures 5.1, 5.2, 5.3*
Block 2

Block 2, located between Dallius and Liberty Streets includes 1 tax parcel totaling approximately .30 acres. The parcel which borders the City owned Liberty Park is owned by the State of New York and totals .22 acres. It is currently being used as a paved surface parking lot. *Figures 6.1,6.2*

*Figure 6.1* Block 2 Tax Map

*Figure 6.2* Block 2 View Looking South with Liberty Park in the Foreground
Block 3

Block 3, located at the corner of Division Street and Broadway, includes 1 tax map parcel totaling approximately .25 acres that is owned by the State of New York. The parcel is occupied by a vacant two story structure formally known as the Trailways Bus Facility.

Figures 7.1, 7.2, 7.3
Block 4

Block 4, located at the corner of Green and Division Streets, includes 11 tax map parcels totaling approximately .49 acres. Nine parcels are owned the State of New York and 2 parcels are privately owned that the State would acquire. The parcel is currently used as a paved surface parking lot. *Figures 8.1, 8.2, 8.3*

*Figure 8.1* Block 4 Tax Map

*Figure 8.2* Block 4 View Looking East with the SUNY Plaza in the Background

*Figure 8.3* Block 4 View Looking South with the Empire State Plaza Arterial in Background
Block 5

Block 5 is bordered by Green Street to the West, Division Street to the North, Dallius Street to the East and Hamilton Street to the South. It includes 10 parcels totaling approximately .75 acres. Nine tax map parcels are owned by the State of New York and 1 lot is privately owned that the State would acquire. Block 5 is currently used as a paved surface parking lot. *Figures 9.1, 9.2*
Block 6

Block 6 is bordered by Liberty Street to the East, Hamilton Street to the South and Dallius Street to the West. It includes 7 tax map parcels totaling approximately approximately .52 acres. All 7 tax map parcels are privately owned and are leased to the State of New York. Block 6 is currently used as a paved surface parking lot. Figures 10.1, 10.2, 10.3

Figure 10.1 Block 6 Tax Map

Figure 10.2 Block 6 View Looking South – E-Comm Square Buildings to the Left and Greyhound Bus Station in Background

Figure 10.3 Block 6 View Looking East – Rear of the Trailways Bus Station to the Left and Rear of 6 E-Comm Square in Center
Block 7

Block 7, located along the West side of Broadway between Division and Pruyn Streets, is locally referred to as E-Comm Square. E-Comm Square includes 11 tax map parcels totaling approximately 1.87 acres. Eight parcels are owned by the State of New York, 3 parcels are privately owned that are leased to the State in which the State would acquire. The four buildings (2, 3, 4 and 6) which make up E-Comm Square are currently vacant and 4 stories in height. The block is bisected by the Western extension of Division Street which is located between 3 and 4 E-Comm Square. This section of Division Street is currently hardscape limited to pedestrian access only. It is encumbered by a 20 foot wide easement for the NYSOGS 48 inch water intake that extends from the Hudson River to the Empire State Plaza. The 48 inch water intake is a major source for heating and cooling of the Empire State Plaza. Figures 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.4, 11.5

Block 7 also includes 2 paved surface parking lots that accommodates parking spaces for approximately 94 vehicles. The individual square footage of the buildings are as follows:

- 2 E-Comm Square ........................... 22,507 sq. ft.
- 3 E-Comm Square ........................... 72,118 sq. ft.
- 4 E-Comm Square ........................... 13,128 sq. ft.
- 6 E-Comm Square ........................... 36,500 sq. ft.
Figure 11.2 Block 7 View Looking West at 4 E-Comm Square

Figure 11.3 Block 7 View Looking West – 6 E-Comm Square to the Right, 4 E-Comm Square to the Left Between the Buildings is the Missing Tooth Along Broadway

Figure 11.4 Block 7 View Looking West at 6 E-Comm Square

Figure 11.5 Block 7 View Looking West with 2 E-Comm Square to the Left and 4 E-Comm Square to the Right
Study Area Infrastructure

Dry Utilities

In 2007 PCG prepared a preliminary dry system utility report within the study area that included fiber optic, cable television, telephone, gas and electric. The following is an inventory of dry utility companies having existing facilities within and adjacent to the study area:

- Electric System - National Grid, local distribution and transmission
- Natural Gas - National Grid, local distribution and transmission
- Telephone - Verizon, copper cables and fiber optic
- Cable Television - Time Warner, coaxial cables and fiber optic
- Fiber Optic - Fiber Technologies, Quest Communications, Elantic Telecom, State of New York Office for Technology

Dry utilities are primarily located within the study areas street right of ways. Hudson Avenue is a primary utility corridor and is heavily congested with multiple dry utilities. Figure 12

Wet Utilities

In 2008 CHA prepared a detailed survey of the study areas site infrastructure including sanitary sewer, water, storm water, overhead utilities and chilled water. For the most part these utilities are located within the street right of ways. There are several significant utilities within the study area including the 48 inch New York State Office of General Services (NYSOGS) Cooling Water Intake, and the 54 inch Albany County Interceptor Sewer Figure 13. A full scale map showing utility locations is included in Appendix E.

Most of the study area’s utility infrastructure is at or near the end of its service life based solely on the record years of installation and operation and maintenance (O&M) records. Due diligence research was performed with in-person meetings with the County Sewer District Executive Director as well as the City Commissioner, Department of Water and Wastewater, which confirmed this information.

Water Distribution Systems: There are existing cast iron watermains located within all of the City streets within the study area with typical sizes of 8”, 12” and 20” diameter. Most of the watermains were installed in the 1893, 1895 and 1906 time frame except possibly for lower Dallius Street which was installed in 1959. The system in this area has a history of sporadic failures (breaks) which are difficult to predict and are repaired as needed. These watermains have been underutilized for decades and this part of the system is within a reduced pressure zone.

In addition, it is noteworthy that both concept plans for Phase 2 include the elimination of the lower Green Street ROW with a rerouting of lower Green Street to the southwest boundary of the study area. This would require abandonment of the existing 12” and 30” diameter watermains on lower Green Street and relocating them (possibly combining the two) within the proposed new green Street alignment being proposed.

Sanitary Sewer Systems: The sanitary sewer system within the study area is combined with the existing storm sewers. The City of Albany has been addressing the issue of the Combined Sewer Overflow which is problematic during peak periods of stormwater runoff for conveyance and treatment. Separation of the sanitary sewer and storm water will most likely be required as part of redevelopment within the study area. In discussions with the City there are downstream connection opportunities to dedicated storm sewers at an outfall to the Hudson River at Hamilton Street and Hudson Street. Both locations have regulated separation chambers which allow low dry period flows to run to the County’s South Waste Water Treatment plant with peak combined flows overflowing to the river. The County’s Interceptor Trunk runs through the center of the study area from north to south to the County District’s South WWTP. Its route starts on Hudson Street as a 48” diameter RCP and increases to 54” diameter RCP in the middle of Liberty Park continuing south under Dallius Street to off the study area.

Combined Storm Sewers (CS): In general, all streets within the study area have single or in the case of Green Street, dual parallel combined storm sewer, consisting of vitrified clay pipe (V.P.) ranging in sizes of 10”, 12”, 20”, 30” & 36” diameter. Currently, there are 2 CS trunk lines that the study area contributes flow to. This includes the trunk line running east within Hudson Avenue (5’ diameter brick) then running off the study area to the east under the center of the NYS Education Department building that continues south along the west side of I-787 which connects to another 20” trunk line running east within Division Street. These two lines combine into a 72”/96” line that runs east under I-787 and discharges into the Hudson River. A third CS trunk line receives flows from 30” CS at Hamilton Street & Broadway and continues east under I-787 in a 36”/48” RCP line before discharging into the Hudson River. Separated storm and wastewater utility infrastructure for new and redeveloped areas are currently discharging into the Hudson River. New stormwater management requirements include measures for runoff reduction, water quality treatment and traditional quantitative controls per current state and local requirements.

Major Utilities

New York State Office of General Services (NYSOGS) Cooling Water Intake: Constructed in 1966 by NYSOGS there is an existing 48 inch steel concrete encased cooling water intake system that conveys water from the Hudson River to provide cooling water for the Times Union Center, Empire State Plaza and SUNY Plaza. The cooling water extends in an westerly direction from Broadway between the 4, 3 and 2 E-Comm Square buildings (Inactive Hamilton Street Right of Way) and continuing westerly within the active Hamilton Street Right of Way. The depth of the water cooling intake varies from 6 to 10 feet below the ground surface. The system runs uninterrupted except for a two day period scheduled shutdown each year on Columbus Day weekend. Impacts to or relocation of this utility should be avoided. Figure 13
Figure 12  Dry Utilities Map by PCG
Albany County Interceptor Sewer: Constructed between 1914 and 1918 the County’s Interceptor Trunk runs through the center of the study area from north to south to the County District’s South WWTP. Its route starts on Hudson Street as a 48” diameter RCP and increases to 54” diameter RCP in the middle of Liberty Park continuing south under Dallius Street. The County reports that this trunk line has a shallow bury depth and is very flat (reportedly about 0.10 percent on average). Periodically there have been some reported issues with odor from the interceptor sewer. Corrective actions can be implemented that will minimize this condition so that it will not have an effect on redevelopment. Impacts to or relocation of this utility should be avoided. Figure 13

City of Albany 12 and 20 inch Water Main: Located within the Green Street corridor are the City of Albany’s 12 and 20 inch water mains. These mains currently provide a hydraulic loop to the City of Albany’s downtown water system. Installed in the mid 1890’s these mains do not currently provide service to any properties within the study area. In discussions with the City depending upon the redevelopment plan there may be an opportunity for relocating as well as combining these two lines. Figure 13

Sanitary Sewer and Water: The properties within the study area are serviced by municipal water and sanitary utilities. The study area has combined sanitary and storm as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Sanitary Sewer</th>
<th>Storm Sewer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hudson Avenue</td>
<td>8” CIP</td>
<td>18” PVC within 60” Brick Arch</td>
<td>Combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Street</td>
<td>12-24” CIP</td>
<td>12” VCP</td>
<td>Combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty Street</td>
<td>8” CIP</td>
<td>12” VCP</td>
<td>Combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallius Street</td>
<td>8” CIP</td>
<td>10”, 12”, 15” RCP</td>
<td>Combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division Street</td>
<td>12” CIP</td>
<td>12”, 18”, 24” VCP</td>
<td>Combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton Street</td>
<td>8” CIP</td>
<td>24” VCP, 24”, 36” RCP</td>
<td>Combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadway</td>
<td>12”CIP</td>
<td>12” VCP</td>
<td>Combined</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CS-O Combined Sewer Overlay: The study area is situated entirely within an area served by combined (sanitary and storm) sewers. Historically, peak storm returns have resulted in combined flows above certain system capacities being discharged into the nearby Hudson River. Regular and low flows are segregated from the main CS line via splitter boxes and conveyed to the Albany County Sewer District’s south wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) situated approximately 1 mile south of the study area where combined sewage is treated and discharged into the Hudson River. Excessive flows surcharge the splitter boxes with direct discharge into the Hudson River. As part of the City’s plan for compliance with a State Consent Order to separate these sewers concurrent with new or re-development, separation of combined sewers is required. Further, in order to mitigate peak stormwater runoff and improved water quality, new and re-developments within the study area must comply with the City and State requirements for qualitative and quantitative stormwater management. Future design considerations in this regard may include green infrastructure practices such as biofilters, rain gardens, green or blue roofs, proprietary water quality treatment structures and probable underground extended detention and/or infiltration gallery systems prior to release of stormwater to the Hudson River.
Figure 13  Wet Utilities Map
**Traffic/Transportation**

The study area is accessible from both the Interstate and local highway systems. I-787 is classified as a principal urban arterial Interstate that provides direct access to downtown Albany from the Capital District’s interstate highway system. Access to the study area from the northbound I-787 is available from the Broadway exit via Quay Street. Southbound access to the study area is via Madison Avenue, and Colonie Street exit to Water Street frontage road which intersects Broadway.

Broadway is a north-south principal urban arterial that extends from the Port of Albany to the Village of Menands. The section of Broadway between State Street and Water/Quay Street Connector intersection has two lanes for each direction of traffic. The section from Water Street to Madison Avenue is currently one way southbound and has three travel lanes. Access to the study area via Broadway is from the intersections of Division Street and Hudson Avenue. Broadway is currently being proposed by the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) as Bus Rapid Transportation (BRT) Line that would connect to State Street which is currently a BRT. The City of Albany has also designated Broadway as a major bikeway route.

Hudson Avenue is a two lane local urban street that is the primary access corridor within the study area. Approximately 35 feet in width it runs in an East West direction and is signalized at both the Broadway and South Pearl Street intersections. Hudson Avenue provides an important circulation link to the 900 space Hudson Avenue Parking Garage and the Times Union Center. It is also an important pedestrian link from this area of downtown to South Pearl Street.

Green Street is a local urban street that runs parallel to Broadway. Approximately 24 feet in width Green Street is one way southbound from State Street to Hamilton Street. From Hamilton Street to Madison Avenue it is two way. From this location Green Street provides access and circulation from a CDTA bus Staging area and NYSOGS employee parking lot under the elevated Empire State Plaza Arterial.

Liberty Street is a local two lane urban street that provides direct access to the bus station. The width of the street is not well defined and varies in width to approximately 30 feet. It also provides delivery and service access to the back of those business and residential properties that front Broadway.

Green Street runs in a north and south direction within the study area from Madison Avenue to State Street. South of Hudson Avenue to Madison Avenue it is a two lane street. From State Street to Hudson Avenue it become one way in a southerly direction. Green Street is a primary pedestrian link from the study area into downtown and State Street.

Dallius Street which runs in a north south direction through the study area is approximately 50 feet in width.

Division Street runs in an east west direction through the center of the study area is not well defined and varies in width from 24 to 45 feet.

CDTA maintains a central staging area for their buses underneath the elevated Empire State Plaza arterial. The CDTA buses enter this lot from Madison Avenue west of Green Street. They exit via Dallius Street and Hudson Avenue.

The pavement condition of Hudson Avenue, Liberty, Green, Dallius, Division, and Hamilton Streets within the study area have reached their useful life and will require new curbing, sidewalks, full depth pavement replacement and stormwater drainage.

**Transit**

The Bus Terminal at Dallius Street and Division Street is a major terminal hub for the CDTA public transit system, including a transit station for the BusPlus Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network. The northbound transit station located on the east side of Dallius Street south of Division Street features a shelter and benches, while the southbound stop on the west side of Dallius street only provides a branding stanchion and Bus Stop/Route sign. This transit station is served by 13 different CDTA bus routes (the bus route network was recently restructured/reorganized by CDTA). With headways ranging from 10-minutes to 60-minutes or more on individual routes, the result is that approximately 37 buses travel through the redevelopment zone every hour (approximately 1 bus every 1.6 minutes).

The roadways in the redevelopment area used for CDTA bus circulation include Hudson Avenue, Division Street and Dallius Street. The CDTA route map is shown on Figure 14.

In Concept Scenario 1 and Concept Scenario 2, the southern portion of Dallius street is eliminated for vehicular traffic. In both scenarios improvements or changes to the existing street grid should be coordinated with CDTA. If the current bus routes are modified the design should be designed to accommodate the bus turn radius requirements for alternate routes to be used within the study area.

The planning for the former Convention Center site included a recommended concept to convert a portion of the one-way (southbound) segment of Broadway between the BQ Connector and a new Liberty Street extension connector south of Pruyn Street to provide for a northbound (contra-flow) bus-only lane. Implementation of this concept may still be applicable as an option to remove the bus traffic from the proposed redevelopment area and allow CDTA to maintain access to Broadway without incurring additional wheel costs or affecting route schedules. As was noted in the Convention Center study, this concept would require construction within NYSDOT right-of-way and would require break-in-access authorization from NYSDOT and FHWA.

In the DEIS that was prepared for the original Convention Center location, an alternative to provide two-way traffic on Broadway between the BQ Connector and Madison Avenue for general traffic was also considered; but this was dismissed at the time due to LOS and queue impacts at the Broadway/Madison/I-787 intersection. This might be worth revisiting under a presumably lower traffic generation scenario associated with the current redevelopment scenarios. Appendix B
Traffic Circulation

The intersection of Hudson Avenue and Green Street is currently controlled by a traffic signal. Green Street is one-way southbound from State Street to Hamilton Street. It is noted that Liberty Street is currently designated as one-way northbound between Division Street and Hudson Avenue and two-way south of Division Street; however, the carriageway of Liberty Street south of Division Street is approximately 20 feet wide (after considering accommodation for pedestrians and clearance to building faces).

Traffic circulation for the redevelopment scenarios are oriented to leverage access to the signal at Hudson/Green, especially for pedestrian crossings.

The streets in the redevelopment area are proposed to provide 2-way traffic circulation and maintain a grid pattern of streets to the extent practicable. North/south access between Hudson Avenue and Madison Avenue will be maintained in both redevelopment concept scenarios.

The street layout in both concept scenarios maintain the traffic access and flow patterns for the following:

- 66 South Pearl Street parking garage, which is accessed from Division Street.
- CDTA bus staging area under I-787 (entry from Madison Avenue and exit onto Green Street)
- Parking and/or maintenance areas under I-787 (accessed from Hamilton Street)

Figure 14  CDTA Bus Routes
Cultural Resources

The study area lies entirely within the Fort Orange / Downtown Albany Historic District. These are areas designated by the City of Albany as archaeologically sensitive and development would be subject to review by the Historic Resources Commission. In June of 2007 the Albany Convention Center Authority engaged the services of Hartgen Archaeological Associates to undertake a Phase 1A Literature review and Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment. In a letter dated August 7, 2007 from NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation concurred with the recommendations. Appendix F

The Phase 1A survey confirmed the sensitivity of the area and recommended that a Phase 1B survey be prepared. Hartgen undertook a Phase 1B survey resulting in five archaeological sites being identified as warranting additional research (Appendix F). A series of trenches identified within Blocks totaling more than 2800 linear feet were dug throughout the study area Figure 15.

As a result of the Phase 1B survey five archaeological locations were recommended for Phase 2 site evaluation and potential Phase 3 data recovery. This includes Blocks B, E, F, G and L. Five other locations were recommended for construction monitoring. In 2012 Hartgen prepared an Archaeological data Recovery and Construction Monitoring Plan that included information on these locations. In a letter dated March 16, 2012 from NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation indicated that implementation of the data recovery plan would mitigate the planned convention center’s adverse impact on archaeological resources. (Appendix F)

Within the study area is 48 Hudson Avenue, also referred to as the Van Ostrande-Radcliff House, and small green space known as Liberty Park, both dating back to the 18th century. 48 Hudson Avenue has been designated by the City of Albany Historic Resources Commission as an individual structure having historic value.
Geotechnical/Soils

In 2008 CHA completed a Preliminary Geotechnical Report that included soil borings within the study area that extended to depths ranging from 24 feet to 85 feet below the existing ground surface. As depicted in Figure 16 five borings identified as B-1 through B-4A were completed. Boring B-1 was located on Hudson Avenue between South Pearl Street and Green Street; boring B-2 located on Hudson Avenue between Green and Dalius Streets; boring B-3 located on Division Street at the corner of Dalius Street and boring B-4/B-4A were located at Green Street between Hamilton Street and Hudson Avenue.

The results of the Preliminary Geotechnical Report generally included the following:

- Silty Clay encountered 17-23 feet below the ground surface
- Sand encountered in Borings B-1 and B-2 ranging in depths from 21-28 feet below the ground surface
- Glacial Till encountered in Borings B-1, B-2 and B-4A ranging in depths from 17-28 feet below the ground surface
- Highly Weathered Bedrock in Boring B-3 was encountered at approximately 57 feet below the ground surface
- Shale Bedrock core sample was retrieved from boring B-3 at approximately 85 feet below the ground surface
- Ground water was monitored in December 2007 and then again in January 2008. In January the approximate depth to groundwater below existing ground surface ranged from 3-7 feet

Depending on the design and type of construction being proposed, spread footings, mat foundations, or deep foundations could be considered.

Please refer to Appendix G for the Preliminary Geotechnical Report, boring logs and foundation recommendations.

Figure 16 Soil Borings
Building Conditions E-Comm Square

In 2010 CHA prepared a visual building condition assessment of E-Comm Square. The assessment involved buildings 2, 3, 4 and 6. A summary of the findings are as follows. Building systems assessed included structural, mechanical, and electrical. The full assessment report is included in appendix. In addition a Pre Demolition Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) Survey was also completed in 2010. The full report is included in Appendix H.

Building 2
Building 2 is a 4 story structure constructed of timber floor framing supported by interior timber girders and steel columns and exterior multi-wythe brick bearing walls. The building is currently vacant and utilities have been disconnected.

The basement is in good structural condition. The existing roof appears to be beyond its useful life and should be replaced. The building façade is in fair condition and large areas indicate deterioration of the brick mortar joints that require repointing.

In 2011 the building experienced significant damage to the interior finishes from water damage due to failure of the sprinkler system.

The building is equipped with a 1200 amp, 120/208 volt, three phase, four wire Westinghouse switch/fuse type service rate switchboard located in the basement. The electrical system is approximately 25 years old. The fire alarm system is approximately 20 years old and has reached its useful life and should be replaced.

In general the building would need to be brought up to meet current life safety code requirements if renovated.

Building 3
Building 3 is a 4 story structure with a 5th floor penthouse constructed of timber floor framing supported by interior timber girders and columns and exterior multi-wythe brick bearing walls. The building is currently vacant and utilities have been disconnected.

There is no accessible basement; it appears to have been filled in with stone. The existing roof shows signs of deterioration and leaking and needs to be repaired.

All façade locations shows signs of extensive deterioration of the mortar joints that need to be repointed. Window frames show signs of severe rotting and need to be replaced. The building is equipped with a 1600 amp, 120/208 volt, three phase, four wire switch/fuse type Siemens service rated switch board located in the basement. The fire alarm system is approximately 20 years old and has reached the end of its useful life.

In 2011 the building experienced significant damage to the interior finishes from water damage due to failure of the sprinkler system. The building would need to be brought up to meet current life safety code requirements if renovated.

Building 4
Building 4 is a 4 story structure constructed of timber floor framing supported by interior timber girders and steel columns and exterior multi-wythe brick bearing walls. The building is currently vacant and utilities have been disconnected.

The fieldstone and brick bearing walls are in good condition with minor deterioration of the mortar joints. The existing roof shows signs of deterioration and leaking.

The west façade of the building shows signs of settlement in the past with vertical crack extending from the first floor to the third floor.
A portion of the north façade bulges out slightly which indicates that the brick wythes could be delaminating inside the wall or the lateral connection of the wall to the floor or roof framing could be failing. Further investigation is required to determine cause and appropriate method for stabilization of the building.

The building is equipped with a 1200 amp, 120/208 volt, three phase, four wire switch/fuse type Federal Service rated switch board located in the basement. The fire alarm system is approximately 20 years old and has reached the end of its useful life.

The building would need to be brought up to meet current life safety code requirements if renovated.

**Building 6**

Building 6 is a 4 story structure constructed of timber floor framing supported by interior timber girders and columns and exterior multi-wythe brick bearing walls. The building is currently vacant and utilities have been disconnected.

The fieldstone foundation in the basement are deteriorated. A significant area of the underside of the first floor wood framing is covered with mold and fungus. Extensive water damage was observed on all of the floors. The roof appears to have completely failed. The south façade has signs of serious water damage and needs to be stabilized. A majority of the existing window frames show signs of significant rotting.

In 2011 CHA performed a follow up visual inspection and determined that deterioration of the building’s structure and components had continued to deteriorate to a degree that it should be demolished. **Appendix I**

**Trailways Bus Station**

Located at 358 Broadway the structure is a two story slab on grade masonry structure totaling approximately 13,500 square feet. Constructed in the mid 1960’s as a bus station used by Trail Ways the building has been vacant since 1999. Utilities have been disconnected and all building systems have reached the end of their useful life.
Pre Demolition (ACM) Surveys

A Pre Demolition Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) Survey was completed in 2010 for E-Comm Square and the former Trail Ways Bus Station.

E-Comm Square Buildings 2, 3, 4 and 6
CHA identified 229 suspect asbestos containing materials with a total of 509 individual bulk samples being collected. Of the 229 suspect asbestos containing materials identified, 34 asbestos containing materials were confirmed through laboratory testing. It was recommended that these materials be removed. The full report is included in Appendix J.

Trailways Bus Station
CHA identified 71 suspect asbestos containing materials with a total of 199 individual bulk samples being collected. Of the 71 suspect asbestos containing materials identified 16 asbestos containing materials were confirmed through laboratory testing. It was recommended that these materials be removed. The full report is included in Appendix K.

Project Approach

In preparing the Downtown Albany Planning and Feasibility Study, the CHA team first collected data relating to land use regulations, infrastructure, and environmental constraints. This included zoning, existing building conditions, geotechnical, utilities, transportation, historic/archeological, topographic/property surveys, economic development master plans, zoning and floodplains.

Once this wealth of information was cataloged and reviewed, the CHA team reached out to numerous stakeholders. Stakeholders included local developers, real estate brokers, business community, Historic Albany Foundation, Capitalize Albany, Downtown Improvement District, Albany County and the City of Albany. The purpose for reaching out to the various stakeholders was to provide them with an understanding as to the purpose of the study, the goals and objectives that were to be achieved, and to receive input as to their vision and priorities for redevelopment.

The following questions formed the basis of discussions with the various stakeholders:

- Why did the RFP issued in 2015 not result in qualified proposals?
- Impact Albany referenced 550 units, 80,000 SF of office space, 20,000 SF of retail space and a 1,000 car parking garage. If this were built, what impact would it have on the existing markets? Can the market support this size development?
- Do you feel the downtown can support another hotel? If so, what size/type?
- What is the current and expected future demand for office, retail and residential market rate and affordable units as this site? What is the demographic of this demand?
- Is there any demand for institutional space?
- There are four existing former warehouse buildings most recently used as office space. If these buildings could be acquired separately, what is the highest and best use given the market demand today?
- If you owned this property, how might you approach development to maximize the value? How might you phase it? Are there big moves around the site that you would make to create value? What is your vision for this site?
- What uses will complement the new Capital Center and renovated Times Union Center? Any thoughts on how to connect this site to these destinations?
- How would you approach parking for this development?
- What are the public amenities necessary to be included for this site to make it a live, work, play environment?
- How would you rank the importance of the following items for redevelopment in this area of downtown with 1 being very important, 2 being somewhat important and 3 not being important:
  - Parking
  - Public Transit
  - Public Green Space
  - Linkages to Cultural Amenities/Riverfront
  - Linkages to Downtown/Broadway
  - Residential Opportunities (Apartments & Condos)
  - Retail Opportunities (Grocery & Boutique)
  - Office/Institutional Opportunities
  - Walkable Streets
  - Branding
Outreach Feedback

The responses from the stakeholders have been summarized below in the following categories:

Opportunities
- Create a new neighborhood with new construction within the downtown and brand it
- Use of existing studies that can reduce developer costs and time for obtaining permits
- Strong demand for residential development for young professional and empty nesters
- E-Comm and former Trail Ways buildings can be repurposed quickly
- Vacant parcels more attractive than sites where demolition is required
- Continued demographic trend of millennials downsizing and relocating to urban cities
- Enhance Liberty Park as focal point
- Continued growth of Albany Medical Center generating demand for housing
- Demand for a limited service hotel in the 100 room range
- Partnering with SUNY Poly for research use and University at Albany for office
- Demand for destination type use that draws people into the downtown
- Partnering with the Capitalize Albany and the IDA to maximize pilots and incentive programs
- Other potential uses could include movie theater, theme restaurants, movie/sound productions, research/technology

Challenges
- High office vacancy rate in downtown
- Difficult to attract retail regional/national in downtown
- Access and site visibility
- Rezone Albany legislation and the 5% set aside requirement for affordable housing
- Uncertainty with continuation of historic tax credit
- Lack of maintenance and condition of the Greyhound Bus Station
- Need an anchor project to build and maintain momentum in downtown
- Unknown costs associated with historic and archaeological resources
- Age of existing infrastructure
- High land values and taxes
- Robust pilots and tax incentives are required
- Access to convenient parking is critical

Considerations
- Need for participation by the City and County will be required for street and infrastructure improvements
- Need for flexibility to allow for redevelopment of individual blocks as opposed to one master developer for entire study area
- Need to promote architectural design of the redevelopment that is transformational in nature
- Need to include within the plan an entertainment/destination land use that caters to families
- Need to quickly backfill with service retail for residents
- Need to strengthen connections to downtown and the waterfront
- Need to protect Liberty Park
- Need to promote walkable streets
- To continue the current positive trend for repurposing existing vacant buildings the tax credits/incentives cannot be the same as those for new construction. There is greater risk for conversions than with new construction
- Need to encourage the type of architecture that will be transformational in nature
- Historic Albany Foundation is in the process of restoring 48 Hudson Avenue. Due to its historic nature, the building could become an asset to the redevelopment plan as a tourist destination depending on how the building is repurposed and the area around it.

Supported by stakeholder input, planning level sketches for two (2) concept scenarios were prepared that depicted the general intent and location for the proposed uses that were being considered. The concepts also took into consideration urban form, conditions of existing buildings, land use regulations, utilities, street infrastructure, cultural resources, access, and circulation.

The concept sketches were then vetted for consistency with market demand, absorption projections, urban form and the study’s guiding principles. The planning level sketches were then modeled in massing diagrams to determine the building massing for each block. The massing model was supported by a development analysis which determined the number of residential units, and square footages for the various uses. From the massing model and diagrams, the master plan and elevations that supported the redevelopment concept were prepared.

An important factor that was consistent with each scenario evaluated was the ability to provide flexibility so that redevelopment could take place on a block level by individual developers or redevelopment of all seven (7) blocks could be undertaken through a master developer. A financial model was then prepared to test the economic viability of each scenario.

A summary of the redevelopment scenarios is found on the following pages.
Concept Scenario 1

As shown in Figure 17 a preliminary bubble diagram plan was developed which conceptually depicted the location of the proposed uses and circulation patterns for redevelopment within the study area. The bubble diagram plan was then developed into schematic block plans incorporating massing and scale to determine square footages for the proposed redevelopment uses as well as green space and parking. Figures 18 and 19

From the schematic level plans, a development analysis model was prepared that identified the number of residential units and square footages for both new construction and rehabilitation of existing structures. Figure 20

In Concept Scenario 1, the primary redevelopment use would be residential that would include a total of 258 one and two bedroom units. The remaining uses proposed would include an 81 room limited service hotel, 16,634 sf of retail, 105,325 sf of entertainment/destination space and 38,048 sf of green space. In general, new construction would incorporate the following design criteria guidelines:

- Color variations of buildings between street level and upper levels
- Four story construction
- Material variation of buildings between street level and upper levels
- Articulation of upper levels of buildings to emphasize setbacks
- Open space enhancements
- Strong gateway and walkable streets

Block 1

New residential construction for Block 1 would consist primarily of 4 and 5 story buildings approximately 50-60 feet in height that would include 1 and 2 bedroom units and associated parking. Block 1, approximately 1.43 acres in size, would be developed entirely with new residential construction with an orientation facing south onto the newly created Division Street neighborhood center. It is envisioned that the residential building would respectfully wrap around 48 Hudson Avenue and be designed to take into consideration the building’s historic significance of being one of the oldest structures in Downtown Albany with the appropriate setbacks. Retail and commercial uses would be incorporated on the street level at the southeast corner of the building supporting the Division Street neighborhood center. Parking for residential development on Block 1 would be accommodated by the structured parking garage being proposed across the street on Block 4.

The architectural vocabulary for the residential development would be composed utilizing a palette of resilient and familiar urban materials designed to provide a varied urban fabric, while constructed to function as a singular structure. While the main facade and entrance is oriented towards Division Street, the architectural opportunity remains for this structure to maintain a strong presence on Dallius Street, Green Street and especially Hudson Avenue. With new residential construction being proposed adjacent to 48 Hudson Avenue, it should frame that structure by scale and composition to support it as a special structure within this urban setting. Figure 17
Block 2
Block 2, which includes the Historic Liberty Park, would be enhanced to create a new and expanded “green commons” area. The green commons area would encompass the entire block from Hudson Avenue to Division Street and would support a variety of passive type uses. It is envisioned that enhancements would reflect the historic nature of the park and could be incorporated into the improvements. The enhanced green commons area of Liberty Park would also provide a gateway into the neighborhood center with the intersection of Dallius and Division Streets being a primary focal point.

Block 3
Block 3, which is approximately .25 acres in size and includes the former Trail Ways Bus Station, is proposed to be abated and demolished. The reason is that the shuttered building only has one elevated floor level with window openings on the two short sides, which is not conductive for layout of apartments and extensively limiting the number of residential units targeted. The site would be redeveloped with new residential one and two bedroom units on the upper floors, retail space at street level along Broadway, with open air resident parking under the 2nd level behind the retail space.

Architecturally, this block should be assuming strong cues from the existing vernacular along Broadway. The existing 4-story buildings on Block 3, between Hudson Avenue and Division Street, are historic brick structures with punched window openings, adorned with brick corbel and dentil details and showcases street level storefronts that embody the Dutch heritage of Albany. What enhances this block is its location on the corner of a proposed new boulevard, which is the gateway into this new neighborhood being created. This location also presents an opportunity to provide a striking expression architecturally that will enhance the urban fabric and street wall along Broadway, as well as reinforcing this corner as a gateway, with the prominent presence of the gothic styled SUNY Plaza’s south tower anchored right across on Broadway.

Blocks 4 & 5
Blocks 4 and 5, totaling approximately 1.24 acres combined, would be developed with a mix of nonresidential uses including a limited service hotel, retail, and entertainment uses supported by a structured parking garage. These blocks are proposed to be very flexible in the types of uses that could be accommodated. The potential uses envisioned for this location could include, but not necessarily limited to, niche technical offices, start-up incubator spaces, entertainment, commercial, retail, a movie theater, and possibly theme restaurants and/or breweries.

In this scenario, the southern portion of Green Street from Division Street to Hamilton Street would be relocated to the west of Block 4 immediately adjacent to the proposed limited service hotel and structured parking garage. With the relocation of Green Street, the traffic circulation pattern would be maintained to Hamilton Street with connections to Madison Avenue and I-787. The relocation of Green Street provides direct access on three sides of the proposed redevelopment for service, firefighting and emergency vehicles.

The limited service hotel with its proximity to the Times Union Center, The Albany Capital Center, the Egg, the NYS Cultural Center and downtown restaurants will provide an anchor use within the Dallius Street neighborhood center. The design would emphasize the view axis points from Hudson Avenue to the entrance of the hotel and across the expanded Liberty Park Commons to the Division Street neighborhood center.

Block 5, which is approximately .75 acres, would be developed with retail and commercial uses at street level and destination/entertainment uses above. Maximum lot coverage would be approximately 100%.
Figure 18  Concept Scenario 1 Massing Plan
Block 6

Block 6, which totals approximately .52 acres, would be developed with parking at ground level and residential units on the upper floors.

Vehicular use of the southern portion of Dallius Street between Block 5 and 6 is proposed to be eliminated. The existing right of way, which also includes the easement for the Albany County interceptor sewer line, would remain. However, it would be enhanced as pedestrian plaza space with the appropriate urban landscape improvements. This pedestrian space would support outdoor activities associated with the redevelopment uses proposed for the Division Street neighborhood center. Design of the pedestrian space would also allow access, if necessary for firefighting and emergency vehicles. Blocks 4 and 5 are functionally symbiotic. The limited service hotel, and the adjacent retail and entertainment structure will provide the western most anchor within the neighborhood. Architecturally there can be a range of materials and colors that could appropriately strike a contrast to the residential structures proposed along the north side of Division Street to communicate the uniqueness of these non-residential structures.

The architectural design of the limited service hotel would take advantage of the view axis down Green Street with height, scale and materials used at the main entrance. At street level, a fully glazed welcoming facade would be an appropriate design element.

The parking garage would be proposed as a modest utilitarian structure, as it should be considered a background building that acts as a foil to reinforce the prominent surrounding new construction on the north and west sides.

The architectural design of the residential structure on Block 6 would be designed as a signature anchor building that incorporates building materials which would enhance the Dallius Street Neighborhood center. The architectural design of the building façade design should take advantage of the view axis from Hudson Avenue across Liberty Park and from Broadway.

Block 7

Block 7, which is approximately 1.87 acres, includes the vacant E-Comm Square buildings 2, 3, 4 and 6. All existing buildings, with the exception of 6 E-Comm Square, would be redeveloped and repurposed for residential use. 6 E-Comm Square, at the corner of Division Street and Broadway, is in a serious state of structural deterioration, as demonstrated through cordoned off areas on the southside, where exterior bricks have fallen over the last few years. It is recommended that 6 E-Comm Square be demolished and redeveloped with new residential construction.

There are two primary lots that comprise Block 7 along Broadway. The north lot between Division Street and Hamilton Street Way is the lot where 6 E-Comm Square will be demolished to make room for the new construction of a 4-story residential building. This new building will be adjacent to the existing 4E-Comm Square building, which will be fully renovated to accommodate additional residential units with retail storefront space on Broadway. Open air parking for both residential structures would be provided on the backside of the buildings along Liberty Street. Similarly to Block 3, the new construction at the corner of Broadway and Division Street, will provide the same architectural opportunity to express the notion of gateway into the newly created neighborhood, as well as continuing to infill and reinforce the street wall and urban fabric along Broadway.

The south lot is framed between Hamilton Street and Pruyn Street, and houses the existing 4-story buildings of 2 and 3 E-Comm Square, which would be repurposed and fully renovated to provide similar residential units. These two existing structures are conjoined and should be aesthetically designed to be viewed as a singular residential facility. 2 E-Comm Square has building frontage along Broadway, which also strengthens the notion of street wall. Both buildings combined form an L-shaped building footprint that defines the south lot's residual space at the corner of Broadway and Pruyn Street, which would be designated as an open air parking lot for residents. As the primary source of security, it is recommended that these north and south parking lots would be fenced in, well-lit and installed with security cameras. Given the upper residential units of both Block 3 and Block 7 have direct views down onto the lots (“eyes on the street”), the locals’ presence would infer a secondary level of security.

The space between the north and south lots of Block 7 or Hamilton Street Way, offers an opportunity for a pedestrian friendly green space that would provide access to and from the new neighborhood. In addition, this green space is part of the urban path that leads east towards the Hudson River, where the historic destroyer USS Slater is moored as a museum exhibit, and continuing on northward, to the Jennings Landing Amphitheater at the Corning Preserve that hosts outdoor public concerts and special events. Appendi
The new residential construction will be designed with a primary orientation being focused on the Broadway corridor with a view towards SUNY Plaza. The open lot adjacent to 6 E-Comm Square is currently being used as a surface parking lot. This “missing tooth” does not enhance the street wall and would be infilled with new residential construction maintaining the appropriate height and scale that currently exists along the Broadway corridor.

Parking would be provided by improvements to the existing surface parking lot on Liberty Street. The current condition of E-Comm Square Buildings 2, 3, and 4 with the necessary improvements would be re-purposed for residential uses. Parking would be provided by improving the existing surface lot on Pryun Street. The existing open space easement between E-Comm Square Buildings 2 and 4 would be improved to coincide with the intersection improvements on Broadway that will provide enhanced connection to the Hudson River Waterfront.

The design of new residential and retail development in Block 7 will have the opportunity as the front door into downtown Albany to support the scale and material of the Broadway corridor with newer and more creative building materials. There is also the opportunity to speak to the loft warehouse feel of E-Comm Square buildings incorporating strong common masonry, with larger window openings and divided-lites.

Throughout scenario 1, Green, Dallius, Division and Liberty Streets would be improved with walkable street enhancements to support the redevelopments urban form.

In particular the northern section of Dallius Street and the western portion of Division Street would be designed to include an urban landscaped Boulevard creating a gateway into the neighborhood center. Redevelopment within the study area would require full depth replacement of the street sections in accordance with City of Albany standards, street lighting and wayfinding. In addition the existing sanitary sewers, watermains, storm water utilities would all need to be replaced to provide adequate service for the proposed redevelopment. Typical cross sections for the urban streets within the study area would be as follows:

- Green Street would be designed to have two 11 foot travel lanes, 9 foot wide parking lane on the west side, 10 foot wide sidewalk, and planting space on west side. Total section 42 feet.

- Division Street would be designed to have two 11 foot wide travel lanes, separated by a landscaped boulevard at the entrance to Broadway, 9 foot wide parking lane on the south side, 10 foot wide sidewalks, and planting space on both sides. The total section is 52 feet.

- Dallius Street would be designed to have two 11 foot travel lanes separated by a landscaped boulevard at the entrance from Hudson Street, 9 foot wide parking lane on the west side, and 10 foot wide sidewalks and planting space on both sides.

- Liberty Street would be designed to have two have two 12 foot travel lanes and 10 foot wide side walk on the west side.

Streetscape improvements from edge of curb to sidewalks will also incorporate green infrastructure practices designed to promote natural interception and infiltration of stormwater. Techniques to be considered include:

- Rain garden planting zones
- Porous surfaces that allow stormwater to pass through and be stored in the systems structured soil and stone reservoir
- Catch basins that are designed for pretreatment and removal of floatables and sediment before entering into the green infrastructure system

These techniques and others will reduce the impacts on the existing combined sewer overflow system reducing demands during heavy rainfall events and subsequent combined sewer overflows to the Hudson River.

Figure 21 depicts the proposed redevelopment master plan for the study area and Figure 22 presents a typical architectural elevation showing the scale and image on the type of development being considered.
Figure 19 Concept Scenario 1 Massing Elevations

Street View A (Division St & Liberty St - looking west)

Street View B (Hudson St & Dallius St - looking south)
## Concept 1 - Development Analysis

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* Block 7: Rehab - 82,550 SF; New Construction - 38,269 SF

**Figure 20** Concept Scenario 1 Development Analysis
Figure 22. Concept Scenario 1 Development Rendering - View Looking Southeast From Hudson Avenue Towards Green Street
Concept Scenario 2

As shown in Figure 23, a preliminary bubble diagram plan was developed, which conceptually depicts the location of the proposed uses and circulation patterns for redevelopment within the study area. The bubble diagram plan was then developed into schematic block plans incorporating massing and scale to determine square footages for the proposed redevelopment uses as well as green space and parking. Figures 24, 25

From the schematic level plans, a development analysis was prepared that identified the number of residential units and square footages for both new construction and rehabilitation of existing structures Figure 26. In Concept Scenario 2 the primary redevelopment use would remain as residential and include a total of 303 one and two bedroom units. The remaining uses proposed would include 13,221 sf of retail, 90,236 sf of entertainment/destination and 26,424 sf of green space. In general, new construction would incorporate the following design criteria guidelines:

- Color variations of buildings between street level and upper levels
- Material variation of buildings between street level and upper levels
- Articulation of upper levels of buildings to emphasize setbacks

In Concept Scenario 2, the primary redevelopment use would remain as residential rental units. Also included in the neighborhood redevelopment concept, would be commercial space, a limited service hotel and destination/entertainment component. Similar to Concept Scenario 1, new construction would consist primarily of 4 and 5 story buildings, approximately 60-70 feet in height. A strong architecturally reinforced neighborhood center would be created at the intersection of Dallius and Division Streets.

Block 1

Block 1, which totals approximately 1.43 acres, would be developed entirely for new residential units. The new residential development would be concentrated on the west side of the block adjacent to 48 Hudson Avenue, one of the oldest structures in Downtown Albany with an orientation onto the newly created Division Street Neighborhood Center. On the east side of Block 1 adjacent to 48 Hudson Avenue, the area would be enhanced as public pedestrian green space, that in conjunction with Liberty Park on Block 2, would form a gateway into the neighborhood center, which would also include a tree lined boulevard. The major distinction between the two Concept Scenarios, is that Concept 2 provides the neighborhood center with additional public green space along Hudson Avenue coupled with Liberty Park across Dallius Street. Though the Block 1 green space displaces, new additional residential units are added to Block 2.
Block 2

The northern section of Block 2, which includes Liberty Park, would be enhanced and continue to accommodate passive uses, as well as forming the gateway into the neighborhood center. The southern parcel on Block 2, which is approximately .30 acres in size, would be developed as new residential units on the upper levels with secured parking located on street level under the building. Retail use would also be incorporated into the building at street level with an orientation towards the Dallius and Division Street intersection, which compliments the retail space kiddy-corner on Block 5, encouraging pedestrian activity at this intersection. With the addition of the residential building on the south side of Liberty Park, the massing also reinforces the notion of street wall on Division Street.

Block 3

Block 3, which is approximately .25 acres in size and includes the former Trail Ways Bus Station, is proposed to be abated and demolished. The reason is that the shuttered building only has one elevated floor level with window openings on the two short sides, which is not conductive for layout of apartments and extensively limiting the number of residential units targeted. The site would be redeveloped with new residential one and two bedroom units on the upper floors, retail space at street level along Broadway, with open air resident parking under the 2nd level behind the retail space.

Architecturally, this block should be assuming strong cues from the existing vernacular along Broadway. The existing 4-story buildings on Block 3, between Hudson Avenue and Division Street, are historic brick structures with punched window openings, adorned with brick corbel and dentil details and showcases street level storefronts that embody the Dutch heritage of Albany. What enhances this block is its location on the corner of a proposed new boulevard, which is the gateway into this new neighborhood being created. This location also presents an opportunity to provide a striking expression architecturally that will enhance the urban fabric and street wall along Broadway, as well as reinforcing this corner as a gateway, with the prominent presence of the gothic styled SUNY Plaza’s south tower anchored right across on Broadway. With a prominent position on Broadway corridor, view to SUNY Plaza, proximity to local hospitality and entertainment venues, this could be an ideal location for new residential construction.

Blocks 4 & 5

Block 4 in conjunction with Block 5, totals approximately 1.24 acres, and would be developed to include residential, retail, and a structured parking garage. New residential construction would be concentrated along the entire block between Green and Dallius Streets. At the intersection of Division and Dallius Streets, retail uses would be incorporated at the street level with residential units on the upper floors. The secured structured parking garage would service the residential development on Blocks 1, 4 and 5.

In this scenario, the southern portion of Green Street would be relocated to the west adjacent to the proposed residential development and structured parking garage. With the relocation of Green Street, the traffic circulation pattern would be maintained to Hamilton Street with connections to Madison Avenue and I-787. It also provides direct access on three sides of the proposed redevelopment for service, firefighting and emergency vehicles.

Block 6

Block 6, which totals approximately .5 acres, would be developed with a mix of nonresidential uses. This block is proposed to be very flexible in the types of uses that could be accommodated. The potential uses envisioned for this location could include, but not necessarily limited to niche technical office, entertainment, commercial, retail, movie theater, and possibly theme restaurants.

Vehicular use of the southern portion of Dallius Street between Blocks 5 and 6 is proposed to be eliminated. The existing right of way, which also includes the easement for the Albany County interceptor sewer line would remain, however, it would be enhanced as pedestrian plaza space with the appropriate urban landscape improvements. This pedestrian space would support outdoor activities associated with the redevelopment uses proposed for the Division Street neighborhood center and first floor retail proposed for Block 5. The pedestrian space would also be designed to allow access, if necessary for firefighting and emergency vehicles.
Block 7

Block 7, which is approximately 1.87 acres, includes the vacant E-Comm Square buildings 2, 3, 4 and 6. All existing buildings, with the exception of 6 E-Comm Square, would be redeveloped and repurposed for residential use. 6 E-Comm Square, at the corner of Division Street and Broadway, is in a serious state of structural deterioration, as demonstrated through cordoned off areas on the south side, where exterior bricks have fallen over the last few years. It is recommended that 6 E-Comm Square be demolished and redeveloped with new residential construction. The open lot adjacent to 6 E-Comm Square or “missing tooth” would be infilled with new residential construction maintaining the appropriate height and scale of the buildings currently along the Broadway corridor. The current condition of E-Comm Square buildings 2, 3 and 4 with the necessary improvements would be repurposed for residential uses.

Connections to the riverfront and downtown would be accommodated through enhanced walkable streets and intersection improvements. Parking would be accommodated through the construction of a new structured garage on Blocks 4 and 5, existing surface lots associated with E-Comm Square and at ground level with residential units above for a portion of the new residential construction.

In particular the entire length of Dallius Street and the western portion of Division Street would be designed as a landscaped Boulevard creating a gateway into the neighborhood center.

Redevelopment within the study area would require full depth replacement of the street sections in accordance with City of Albany standards, street lighting and wayfinding. In addition the existing sanitary sewers, water mains, storm water utilities would need to be replaced to provide adequate service for the proposed redevelopment.

Throughout concept scenario 2, Green, Dallius, Division and Liberty Streets would be improved with walkable street enhancements to support the redevelopments urban form. Typical cross sections for the urban streets within the study would be as follows:

Green Street would be designed to have two 11 foot travel lanes, 9 foot wide parking lane on the west side, 10 foot wide sidewalk, and planting space on west side. The total section is 42 feet.

Division Street would be designed to have two 11 foot wide travel lanes separated by a landscaped boulevard along the entire length, 9 foot wide parking lane on the south side, 10 foot wide sidewalks, and planting space on both sides. The total section is 52 feet.

Dallius Street would be designed to have two 11 foot travel lanes separated, 9 foot wide parking lane on the west side, and 10 wide sidewalks and planting space on both sides.

Liberty Street would be designed to have two 12 foot travel lanes and 10 foot wide side walk on the west side.

Streetscape improvements from edge of curb to sidewalks will also incorporate green infrastructure practices designed to promote natural interception and infiltration of stormwater. Techniques to be considered include:

- Rain garden planting zones
- Porous surfaces that allow stormwater to pass through and be stored in the systems structured soil and stone reservoir
- Catch basins that are designed for pretreatment and removal of floatables and sediment before entering into the green infrastructure system

These techniques and others will reduce the impacts on the existing combined sewer overflow system reducing demands during heavy rainfall events and subsequent combined sewer overflows to the Hudson River.

Figure 27 depicts the proposed redevelopment plan for the study area and Figure 28 presents a typical architectural elevation showing the scale and image on the type of development being considered.
Figure 24 Concept Scenario 2 Massing Plan
Figure 25: Concept Scenario 2 Massing Elevations

Street View A (Division St & Liberty St - looking west)

Street View B (Hudson St & Dallius St - looking south)
## Concept 2 - Development Analysis

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| Gross Bldg SF | 62,852  | 50,038  | 42,552  | See Block 5 | 232,957 | 90,237  | 205,996 | 687,832 |

* Block 7: Rehab - 92,650 SF; New Construction - 96,909 SF

Figure 26 Concept Scenario 2 Development Analysis
Figure 27 Concept Scenario 2 Redevelopment Plan
Figure 28 Concept Scenario 2 Development Rendering - View Looking South From Hudson Avenue Towards Dallius Street
Redevelopment Phasing

It is anticipated that full buildout would take place over a 7 year period as follows:

**Concept Scenario 1**

In Year 1, Phase 1 - Blocks 3 and 7 would be initiated. Phase 1 responds to current demands for residential development in both new construction and repurposing existing structures within the downtown. Phase 1 also reinforces the street wall approach along Broadway, which is a major entrance into the downtown. As depicted in Figure 30, Phase 1 would include the following:

- Demolition of Trail Ways Bus Garage on Block 3
- New residential/retail construction on Block 3
- Demolition of 6E-Comm Square
- New residential construction on 6 E-Comm Square site
- New residential/retail infill Construction on Broadway
- Repurposing 2,3,4 E-Comm Square for residential
- Division Street improvements from Broadway to Liberty Street
- Street scape improvements along Broadway

In Year 3, Phase 2 - Blocks 2 and 6 would be completed. Block 2 improvements will provide open space and new residential construction. As depicted in Figure 31, Phase 3 will include the following:

- Enhancement and expansion of the Liberty park and green commons
- New residential construction on Block 6

In Year 7, Phase 3 - Blocks 1, 4, and 5 would be completed. The construction of the Parking Garage is a key element that will be needed to support the Hotel in addition to the residential and Entertainment uses. As depicted in Figure 32, Phase 2 would include the following:

- New residential construction Block 1
- Construction of limited service hotel Block 4
- Construction of structured parking garage Block 4
- Construction of retail/entertainment Block 6
- Pedestrian plaza between Blocks 5 and 6
- Relocation of Green Street
- Improvements to Division Street from Green to Liberty Street
- Improvements to Dallius Street from Hudson Street to Division Street

Figure 30 Concept Scenario 1 Phasing Plan - Phase 1
Concept Scenario 2

In Year 1, Phase 1 - Blocks 3 and 7 would be initiated. Phase 1 also responds to both current demands for residential development in both new construction and repurposing existing structures within the downtown. It also proposes to redevelop the site of the former Trailways bus station. As in Concept Scenario 1 Phase 1, it also reinforces the street wall approach along Broadway, which is a major entrance into the downtown. As depicted in Figure 33, Phase 1 would include the following:

- Demolition of the former Trail Ways Bus Station on Block 3
- New residential construction on Block 3
- Demolition of 6E-Comm Square
- New residential construction on 6 E-Comm Square site
- New residential/retail infill Construction on Broadway
- Repurposing 2,3,4 E-Comm Square for residential
- Division Street improvements from Broadway to Liberty Street
- Streetscape improvements along Broadway

In Year 3, Phase 2 - Blocks 1, 4, and 5 would be completed. The construction of the Parking Garage is a key element that will be needed to support the Hotel in addition to the residential and /Entertainment uses: As depicted in Figure 34 Phase 2 would include the following:

- New residential construction Block 1
- Green space improvements Block 1
- New residential construction Block 4
- Construction of structured parking garage Blocks 4 and 5
- Construction of retail Block 5
- Relocation of Green Street
- Improvements to Division Street from Green to Liberty Street
- Improvements to Dallius Street from Hudson Street to Hamilton Street

In Year 7, Phase 3 - Blocks 2 and 6 would be completed. Block 2 improvements will provide open space and new residential construction. As depicted in Figure 35, Phase 3 will include the following:

- Enhancement of the Liberty park
- New residential construction on Block 6
-
Study Conclusions/Recommendations

The proposed redevelopment plan presents a unique opportunity to attract the type of investment that will generate economic growth not only within this 8 acre area of the City but will also strengthen the linkages to the Hudson River, Pastures Neighborhood, Pearl Street, Broadway, State Street and be a catalyst for improving the condition of adjacent properties. This highly underutilized land is an ideal location for attracting the type of mixed use development that promotes a live, work and play environment anchored by walkable streets and greenspace.

The following conclusions and recommendations are supported by information obtained from extensive technical studies previously completed within the study area, updated market research, outreach to stakeholders from the business/real estate community, and City agencies.

- Flexibility in the program that will allow opportunities for development on an individual block basis as the market will not support redevelopment of the entire project all at once.
- Due to lower cost, as compared to new construction, a majority of new residential product in Downtown Albany has resulted from repurposing existing commercial structures.
- Demand for new office and retail space in Downtown Albany is limited. However, encouraging new development to include retail is an important component of creating a sense of urban place that will attract new residents and businesses.
- There appears to be some market demand for a limited service hotel.
- The Capitalize Albany Report projected that there is demand in the market to accommodate new residential development in Downtown Albany. The absorption rate and number of residential units that are being proposed in this study falls within those projections.
- Redevelopment of the former Trail Ways Bus Station and E-Comm Square can be undertaken quickly and relatively cost effectively, and should be targeted as the first phase.
- The deteriorated condition of 6 E-Comm Square requires that the building be demolished.
- Tax incentives and pilot programs are required to support the redevelopment plan. The redevelopment program should seek to maximize tax incentives and public financing tools in order to achieve financial feasibility.
- Partnering with local stakeholders in developing a structured parking garage will support a need that is mutually beneficial for the redevelopment plan and this area of the Downtown.
- The existing infrastructure within the study area has exceeded its useful life and will need to be replaced, increasing the cost of redevelopment.
For more information contact:
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Real Estate Development, Empire State Development
212.803.3768 / thomas.conoscenti@esd.ny.gov