

Envisioning

Sidney's Waterfront Lands

SIDNEY, NY
Susquehanna River

 **GreenPlain**
Naturally Resilient

Community Workshop
January 19, 2022

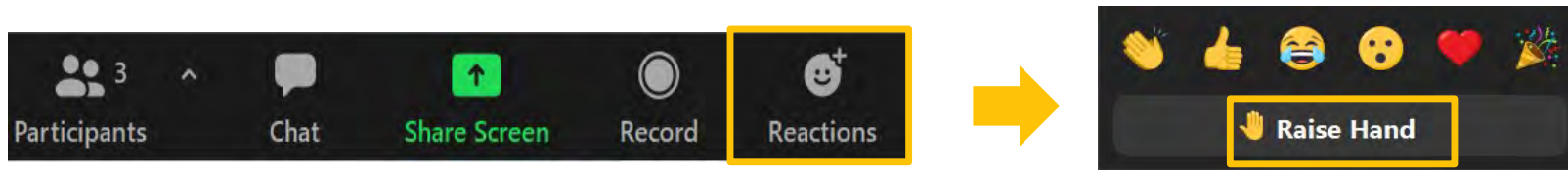


"Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world." – J. Barker

Photographer: Kathe Harrington

Engaging Through Zoom

- We're excited to meet with you online! This meeting will be recorded and rebroadcast on the project website at www.resilient-sidney.com.
- At the end of this presentation, we want to hear your thoughts and ideas.
- **How to share your ideas during the Q&A:**
 - Use the 'raise hand' function to get our attention!



Raise your hand if:

- You were born in Sidney?
- You have lived here over 30 years?
- Less than 5 years?
- You are a student in Sidney?

- Or - use the **chat function** to send messages to the hosts, which we'll ask on your behalf.
- Please keep your microphone muted when you are not speaking.
- If you experience any issues interacting, send us a message us in the chat.

Follow the progress at:
www.resilient-Sidney.com





Photographer: Kathe Harrington

Welcome

RECOVERY PLANS

- Recovery Plans prepared in 2014 after Tropical Storm Lee.
- Supported acquisition of homes in high-risk floodplain as part of managed retreat initiative.
- Buyouts from 2006 flood and 2011 flood are ongoing.

PUBLIC LAND REUSE PLAN

- Village must tell FEMA how land will be used to continue mitigation.

FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDS

- Federal funds will be available at a record level, and we need a shared vision about how to move ahead.

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Sidney was awarded a grant by The Nature Conservancy in 2021 to conduct this visioning process.



GOALS

- Equitably engage residents and regional partners.
- Lay out a climate adaptive land management plan.
- Design resilient community spaces and recreation based on community input.

“Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world”. – J. Barker



A Consensus Vision

We will build a **consensus vision** for community-supported and **environmentally resilient recreation and open space** on the **publicly owned land** along the Susquehanna River

Take a closer look at lands the Village of Sidney will control as a result of donations and flood buyouts.

**SIDNEY
GREENPLAIN**
Resilient design and reuse of our waterfront land to hold floodwater and much more...

Complement a new Comprehensive Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and Land Use Ordinances being developed.

Develop a 10-year plan to use public land for a wide variety of community mitigation resources, recreational spaces, and gathering places.

Develop a land trust or comparable conservation organization to complete buyouts and manage floodplain resources and new amenities.

“Vision is tomorrow’s reality expressed as an idea today” – O. Woodward

WHAT are we doing?

Value
our heritage

Learn
from the past

Respond
to the present

Think
innovatively

Prepare
for the future



“Managed retreat” is Sidney’s primary mitigation strategy.

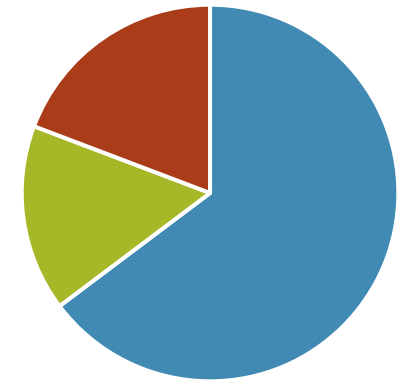
- Permanently relocates people, services or infrastructure to floodsafe locations through land acquisition.
- Reclaims and improves natural floodplain.
- Works to provide replacement housing in the same community – this has been a struggle in Sidney.



Managed Retreat in Sidney

- Buyout process is slow but succeeding – 100+ parcels bought out to date.
- Delaware County has managed the buyouts with funds from FEMA and HUD.

Acquired Parcels



- Acquired (101)
- In Negotiation (25)
- Future Phase (30)



WHAT are we doing?

We can't "solve" flooding.

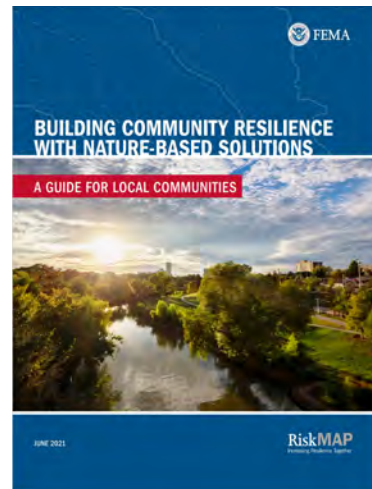
Respond
to the present

SIDNEY CHOOSES NATURE BASED MITIGATION STRATEGIES TO COMPLEMENT MANAGED RETREAT.

Nature-based solutions are sustainable planning, design, environmental and engineering practices that **weave natural features or processes** into the built environment to **promote adaptation and resilience**.

By enlisting natural features, the approach can:

- combat climate change
- reduce flood risks
- improve water quality
- protect property
- restore and protect wetlands
- stabilize riparian corridors
- reduce urban heat
- add recreational space, and more



"At [FEMA/DHS] we must – and we will – do more to address the climate crisis. DHS will implement a new approach to climate change adaptation and resilience, and we will do so with the sense of urgency this problem demands."
Alejandro N. Mayorkas
DHS Secretary



TNC defines nature-based solutions as, "project solutions that are motivated and supported by nature and that may also offer environmental, economic, and social benefits, while increasing resilience. Nature-based solutions include both green and natural infrastructure."



Nature
Based
Solutions

The nature of progress



International Union
for Conservation of
Nature

"Nature causes floods, but humans cause flood damage."
– G. White

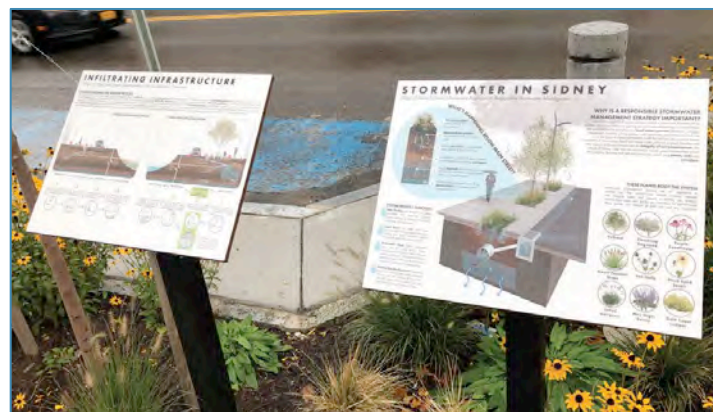
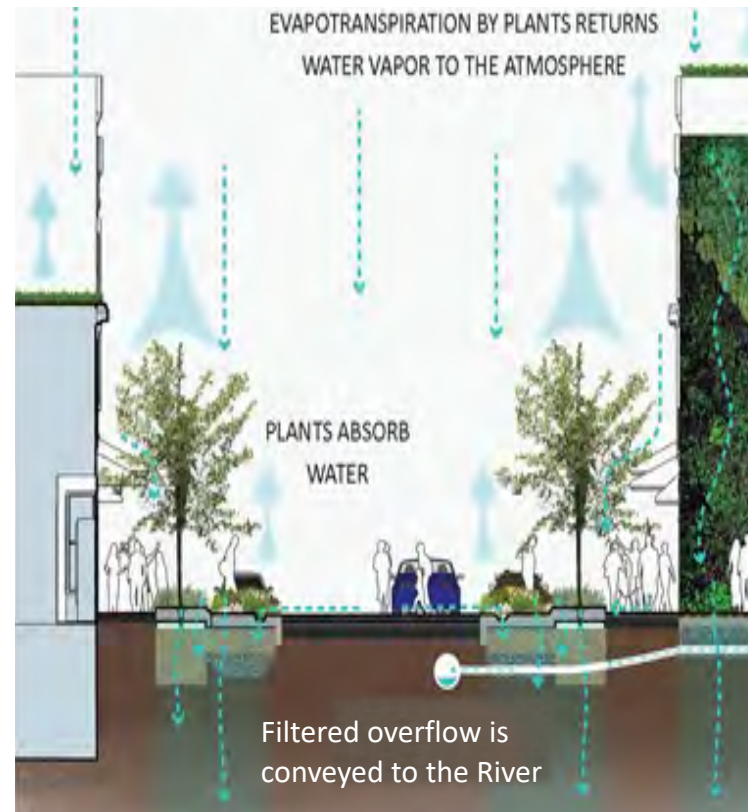
Nature-based solutions offer significant benefits, including:

- economic growth and green jobs
- increased property values
- improvements to public health
- better disease outcomes
- reduced injuries and loss of life

Long Term Community Recovery Strategy (2013).

Think
Innovatively

- Introduced green infrastructure through the Sidney GreenPlain.
- Village commits to work with nature to reduce flood risk.
- Green Main Street streetscape and stormwater management.
- Conceptual design for new residential neighborhood at Riverlea Farm.



HEALTHY RIVER



PIPE DISCHARGE



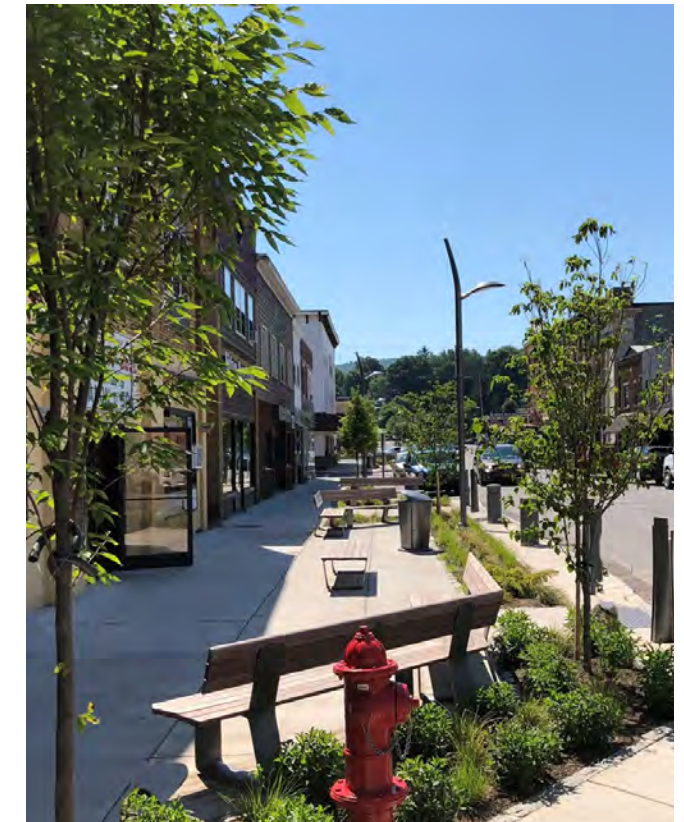
BIOFILTRATION



CONTAMINANTS



URBAN RUNOFF



Green Main Street Project
Completed 2 blocks of Main St.
resilient streetscape,
stormwater retention &
filtration system

NY Rising Plan (2014)

Learn

From the past

Advanced managed retreat and natural mitigation.



2014 VISION STATEMENT

Sidney is a progressive, dynamic and resilient place with the friendly feel of an historic, close-knit community. We embrace our waterways and make sustainable choices that protect our Village residents, our neighboring communities, and our region.

Our green waterfront reduces future risks while offering entertainment, culture, arts, and recreation. The Village's vibrant downtown, flood-safe neighborhoods, and social support systems appeal to everyone, young and old.

Sidney is a strong community devoted to family, fostering businesses large and small, and working together to face any obstacle.





CLIMATE ADAPTATION & RESILIENCE

WHY are we doing this?

We can't "beat" nature.

1. Flooding and flood damage will worsen.
2. Reusing public land restores lost tax base.
3. Young families moving to Sidney want recreation & events.



Flooding in 2006



Flooding in 2011

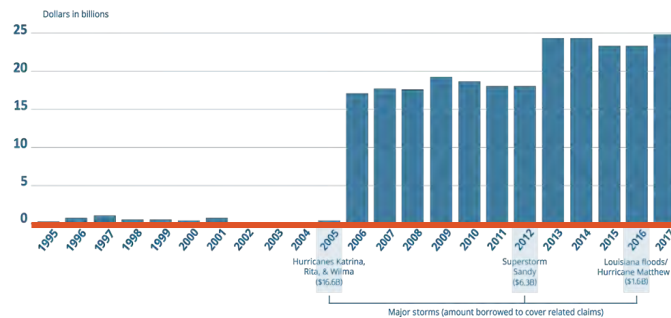


Land to be Reused	Acres
Open Space	68
Keith Clark Park (KCP)	32
KCP Adjacent	3.5
Open Space	21
River St. Clusters	7.5
Nbhd. Clusters	1 - 3.5
Scattered Parcels	2.5

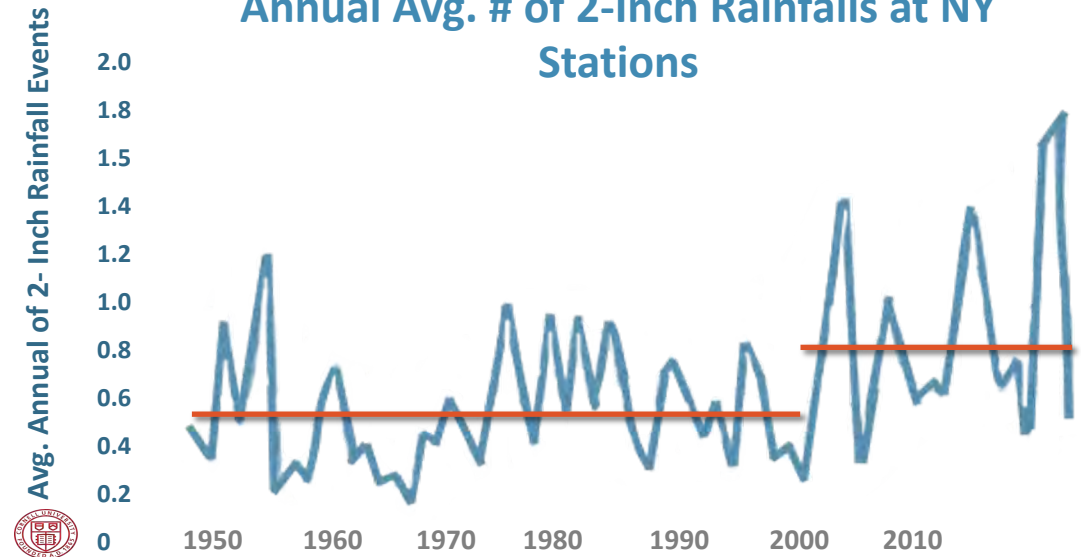
Climate change is projected to:

- Increase flood elevations 1-2 ft.
- Flood twice as many homes in a 10-yr flood.
- Increase residential damage by 80% on average.
- Double damage cost for the 10-year event.

Flood Insurance Premiums Rising to Cover FEMA Costs



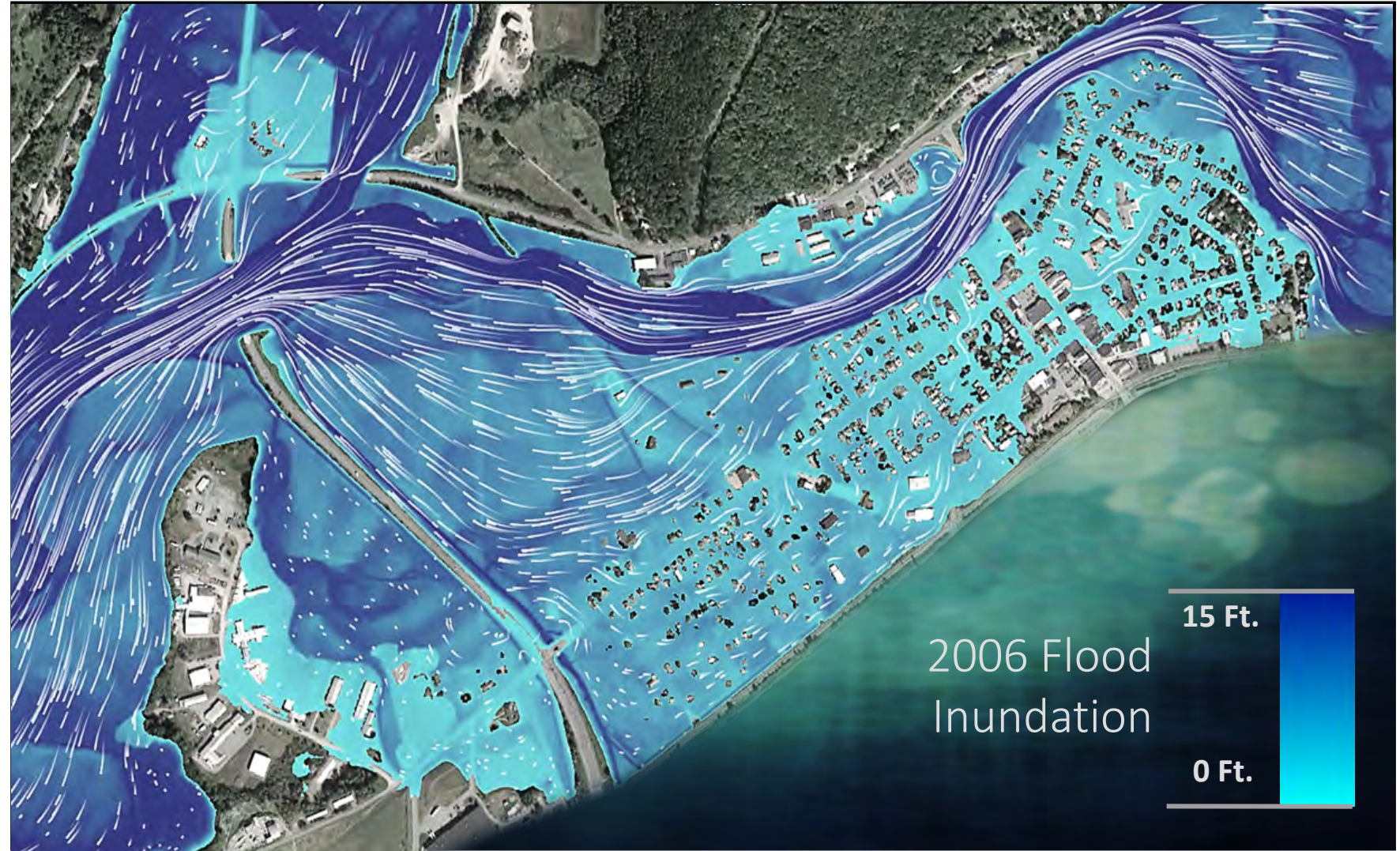
Annual Avg. # of 2-Inch Rainfalls at NY Stations



Climate Adaptation

Community Risk & Resilience

- 2006 flood was approximately a 1-in-100 chance flood (used to define FEMA floodplain).
- Floods like 2006 will become more frequent and more severe with climate change.
- This will cause an average 80% increase in residential flood damages.
- Envisioning process considers current and future conditions, as well as which parts of the floodplain are conveying fast-moving flow and possibly debris.



“Vision is a picture of the future that produces passion.” – B. Hybels





INPUT & VISION

Community Engagement

Community Input to Date

- 3,000 Village-wide Outreach Mailers
- 100+ Vision Survey responses
- 100+ Visual Preference Survey responses
- Newly launched student survey (ongoing)
- Workshop One (November 2021)
- Informal Interviews, Stories and Comments
- Four Focus Groups in January 2022
 - Soccer in Sidney
 - Family-Friendly Sidney
 - Gardens in Sidney
 - Age-Friendly and Accessible Sidney

Next

- Village Board Presentation
- Workshop Three – Plan Presentation

What's Your Vision for Sidney's Riverfront?



We'd like your feedback to help kick off Envisioning Sidney's Resilient Riverfront. Please return this survey to Village Hall (21 Liberty Street) to John Redente or Clarissa Walrath or email it to resilientsidney@gmail.com.
Or you may complete it online at www.resilient-sidney.com/surveys, where you can also take a visual preferences survey about the types of outdoor spaces and recreational uses you'd like to have in Sidney.

"If money was no object what would you wish for along Sidney's riverfront open space?"

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____
6 _____
7 _____
8 _____
9 _____
10 _____

ENGAGE ME!
We'd also like your feedback on how you would like to engage around this project:

1. Would you attend an in-person meeting (socially distanced and masked)?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do you have access to reliable Internet?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you have email?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Are you familiar/comfortable with online meetings (e.g., Zoom, WebEX)?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Would you go to Village Hall to access online meeting rebroadcasts?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Do you live in the waterfront neighborhood?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide your contact information if you would like to receive project updates:

Name: _____ Email: _____
Phone: _____ Address: _____

THANK YOU!

ENVISION OUR RESILIENT RIVERFRONT

Summary of Input from Meetings, Surveys and Focus Groups

90% of survey respondents would like to have more **walking trails in the Village.**

Multi-Use, Year-Round Trails

- Walking trails
- Riverfront paths with overlooks
- Bike trails
- Nature walks and boardwalks for wildlife viewing/birdwatching
- Winter trails (cross country skiing/snowshoeing)
- Regional trail connections (e.g., network of parks from Oneonta and other communities)
- Preserve natural open spaces wildlife habitat



- *“I would love to see a nature sanctuary with walking or biking trails that everyone can use, with a natural park with trees of all kinds planted for birds and animals to inhabit. That can be used as a learning facility too. Something like the Wild Center in the Adirondacks - that would be so nice to have in Sidney and would add to tourism too.”*

ROI for TRAILS: Return of \$7 for every \$1 invested.



Community Input: Key Takeaways

75+% of respondents would like to have more *riverfront paths & overlooks.*

River Access

Student surveys rank river access very highly

- Riverfront views, paths and overlooks
- Kayaking and canoeing access/boat launch
- Boat rentals and storage area
- Fishing platforms
- River floating
- Swimming



- *“A safe, family-friendly way to enjoy being on the river with accessibility for floats, kayaks and canoes. I would love to see Sidney as a destination for people to want to come and play and enjoy the river - and not ignore the fact that the Susquehanna is right there.”*
- *“Create overlooks for photography and scenic use.”*
- *“The Susquehanna used to be a vital waterway.”*



Community Input: Key Takeaways

75% of survey respondents enjoy the idea of **festival space** along the waterfront.

Flexible Open Space for Events and Gathering

- Festival space
- Picnic sites
- Amphitheater
- Art fairs
- Multi-use plaza
- Community lawn



- “Venues for events that draw people into the community are good for our businesses. Event spaces should tie very closely to the downtown revitalization that has been going on.”
- “It would be nice to add an area where food trucks could park and people could picnic during lunch hour or sporting events.”
- It would be great to see our riverfront utilized for all ages – recreational space for events, BBQs, picnics, reunions, vendors, craft fairs, concerts, games, culture, etc.



Community Input: Key Takeaways

Nearly 80% of respondents would like to have a **farm stand along the waterfront.**

Local-Food Related Uses

- Farm stand/market
- Community orchards
- Community gardens
- Edible garden
- Children's garden
- Food trucks



**ROI for impact of local food:
\$8 return for every \$1 invested.**

- *“Tree groves play a critical role in providing clean air, shading, and enhancement of our environment - preserving our planet for generations to come.” – Sidney Shade Tree Commission*
- *“A grove of fruit trees would slow erosion from inevitable flooding, and wouldn't be damaged by it either. Then we could have a fruit fest!”*
- *“Fruit and nut trees, reminiscent of the big oak trees from Oak Street...and other plants that birds and wildlife might enjoy with a continuation of the walking trails through it.”*



Community Input: Key Takeaways

75%+ of respondents would like to have access to a **skating pond in winter.**

Family Fun, Leisure and Sports

- Ice skating rink
- Outdoor spaces for youth (splash pad, teen park, children's garden)
- New youth soccer fields/ multi-purpose sports fields
- Disc golf
- Dog park ("big & small" areas)
- Fitness course/circuit
- Miniature golf course
- Adventure park
- Track & Basketball



- *"Think of Sidney in all four seasons."*
- *"A simple ice-skating rink would be great for families."*
- *"We really need some kind of space for teens and young adults."*
- *"People leave Sidney every weekend to find family-friendly things to do."*
- *"Disc golf is on an unprecedented rise. A sport in which young and aged can play. It takes little maintenance, usually done by clubs."*
- *"Avoid having the same field used for football/ soccer/softball."*



Focus Group 1: Soccer in Sidney

Strong Support for Soccer

- Emphasize need for dedicated soccer fields.
- Soccer facilities ranked in top 3 active sports people would like to make available for ages 13 and under.
- Current soccer field at Willow Street identified as inadequate and unsafe.
- Teams hunt for space – Currently can't host "home" events.
- Need to accommodate large program with the current 170+ players on competitive, organized teams. Children under 13 are in greatest need of fields.



“Supporting our children is where the focus & investment should be.”

“Move soccer fields to open space by Keith Clark Park - siblings & parents can use other park features (playground, walking trails, basketball courts) while waiting, allowing everyone to enjoy more of the park’s amenities.”

“An official soccer field with lights and stands! Something our Sidney Warrior athletes can be proud of and host games on.”



Focus Group 1: Soccer in Sidney

Additional Comments

- Soccer games bring many visitors to Sidney – who represent potential downtown consumers.
- Field hockey is also in dire need of fields. Moveable soccer goals would allow for a shared field with other sports and activities.
- Important to discuss maintenance, operations and related strategies.



“I would love to see dedicated soccer fields so children are not kicked off when another team’s practice is scheduled.”

“Fields the soccer teams can be proud of even if that means soccer families are responsible to take care of them.”

“Bring us up to par with neighboring villages and towns.”



Focus Group 2: Family-Friendly Sidney

Support for a wide range of outdoor, family-friendly spaces and events:

- Ice skating was available in the past as a popular winter activity. Restore it!
- Need ways for families to connect to nature (e.g., trails, picnics, nature areas, children's gardens).
- Add adaptive playground equipment for children with special needs.
- Volleyball courts are highly used in summer – expand and improve them.
- River based activities such as fishing, boating, and rentals.



*“Focus on things that are **interactive for all ages**. Not just a trail that only adults will use or a playground that only kids can use. **Let’s invest in things families can do together.**”*

“A significant number of people in Sidney are moderate or low income and rely on free or affordable public recreation for their families.”

“We would like to see a teen area along river. A fort or small pavilion along walking trail or in KCP would be great. A teen friendly area to meet that’s safe, more fun, and more visible would be wonderful.”



Focus Group 2: Family-Friendly Sidney

Focus on how family-friendly activities will bring others to Sidney:

- Families travel to splash pads! This could bring people from out of the Village to frequent our restaurants and stores.
- Disc golf is fast growing sport with great potential to draw visitors to Sidney. Much of disc golf course maintenance is covered by a volunteer club with fundraising.
- Consider adding a venue for concert series, community/local bands, free community movies, food trucks and for local businesses to sell products.
- Any activity that that can bring in other people benefits the whole Village.



“Sidney has a trail concert series. We could use a more appropriate venue for them than the pavilion in Keith Clark park. Our community band is also pretty active and could use a place to play and practice.”

“The Village used to maintain an ice-skating rink and we spent a lot of time there as children.”

“We need to keep our kids active!”

“Disc golf is all ages, all ability, low cost and great way to get exercise.”



Focus Group 3: Gardens in Sidney

Prioritize farm stands, orchards, community gardens, edible gardens and natural spaces:

- Community gardens with demonstrations & distribution of harvest to local food pantries.
- Low maintenance, public use orchard.
- Wildlife gardens such as a monarch butterfly way station or pollinator gardens.
- Education in the garden (agri-education, outdoor classrooms, nature trails).
- Low maintenance natural areas.
- Garden venues for small gatherings, public art and meditation.
- SCSD Farm-to-School partnership opportunity.



“We’re in a food desert!”

“We could have a fruit fest!”

“A small portion of a harvest could be sold beside the Barking Cat to buy seeds for next year.”

“These are floodplains. Put things in there that will hold up to nature!”

“A natural habitat and planting of trees would be an ideal use for not only Sidney's' residents but our climate as well. With all the attention currently focused on climate change, let's do our part.”



Focus Group 4: Age and Access Friendly Sidney

Age-Friendly, Accessible Amenities:

- Riverfront access for people of all abilities (paths, accessible kayak ramp)
- Fully accessible/adaptive playground
- Large multi-use space community commons to serve all ages
- Accessible trails (all weather, wide and well-lit walking path)
- All ages, all abilities exercise circuit
- Gathering areas, tables and public facilities that accommodate all
- Comfortable seating in shaded areas
- Pickleball and other healthy activities for older residents
- Charging stations for motorized vehicles including mobility devices



“Whatever is designed make it accessible for people in wheelchairs or with walkers. Elderly and disabled are a big part of the community.”

“All areas should incorporate accessibility.”

“A trail that is handicap/wheelchair accessible would be great for the programs in the community to help with those with developmental disabilities.”

“Adaptive/alternatives paths that don’t have too many things going on with them. A separate path to avoid large crowds and noise would be great.”



Aerial Footage of Waterfront



RESILIENT
SIDNEY





POTENTIAL PROJECTS

Recreation & Entertainment Based Economic Development

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increasing number of young families.
- Sidney retains large employers and manufacturing.
- Companies in the Industrial Park are growing.
- Main Street businesses are recovering and new shops and restaurants are opening.

CHALLENGES

- There is a shortage of family-sized and professional homes.
- Land for new development is very limited.
- A significant percentage of Sidney residents are low income (+30%).
- Buyout lands don't generate property tax.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Young people who are staying and returning to start families in Sidney expect recreation, entertainment and goods and services comparable to regional hubs.



Tourism can also support these needs and is an underutilized opportunity.

SIDNEY'S DIRECTION

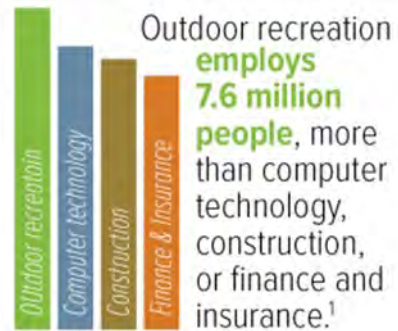
HAVING DEEP COMMUNITY SUPPORT MATTERS – A LOT.

- Maintain open opportunities for community input online and in person – especially with young families and seniors.
- Focus on adding/providing high quality and destination scale recreation and entertainment amenities to attract residents, visitors and workers who can support Sidney's businesses.
- Develop a civic commons with an entertainment venue that might grow over time.

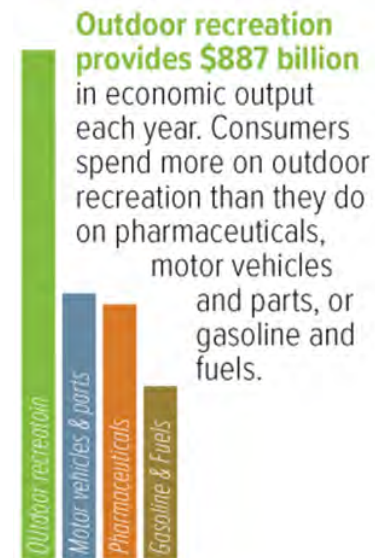
Operations & Maintenance Partnerships.

**Build
Momentum**

EMPLOYMENT



ECONOMIC OUTPUT



COLLABORATION really is the silver bullet.

- Use local municipal, nonprofit and foundation resources to build a framework for the projects.
- Structure private partnerships with recreation and entertainment users including clubs that support baseball, football, soccer, basketball, etc.
- Develop a land trust with mission of conservation and vision to support nature-based climate adaptation.

Return on Investment State Approved Multiplier

Rails to Trails Conservancy - Complete streets & trails	7:1
Parks and Trails NY - State Park System amenities	9:1
Parks and Trails NY - 2021 NYS EPF projects	7:1
Rails to Trails - Empire Trail health benefits	3:1
FEMA - \$1 to mitigate floods saves \$7 future damage	7:1
Rutgers - 2019 \$1 in historic restoration returns \$4	4:1
USDA's ERS - \$1.8 multiplier for impact of local food	8:1

IMPLEMENTATION

- Pursue grants for priority projects including Federal COVID relief funds.
- Develop a public-private cost sharing strategy to operate and maintain recreation amenities (like surrounding communities).
- Increase staff capacity to manage recreation and entertainment amenities.

Flexible Waterfront Event Structure



Atrium Roof for Meadowlands Xanadu in East Rutherford, NJ



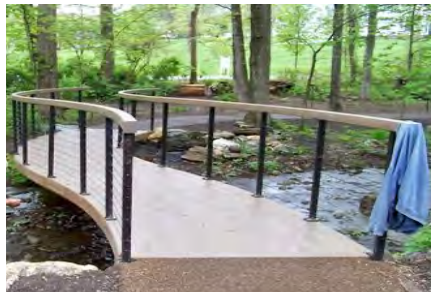
Mohonk Mountain House Ice Skating Pavilion, New Paltz NY



Event Space: Endicott NY



Marist College, Poughkeepsie NY



Other Event Venues



Cedar Rapids Amphitheater, Flood Protection Project in Cedar Rapids, IA



Davidsonville Historic State Park in Arkansas' Ozark Gateway Region



WHERE are we doing this?

We can make way for more water.

“Acquired sites are maintained in perpetuity for the conservation of natural floodplain functions.” - FEMA

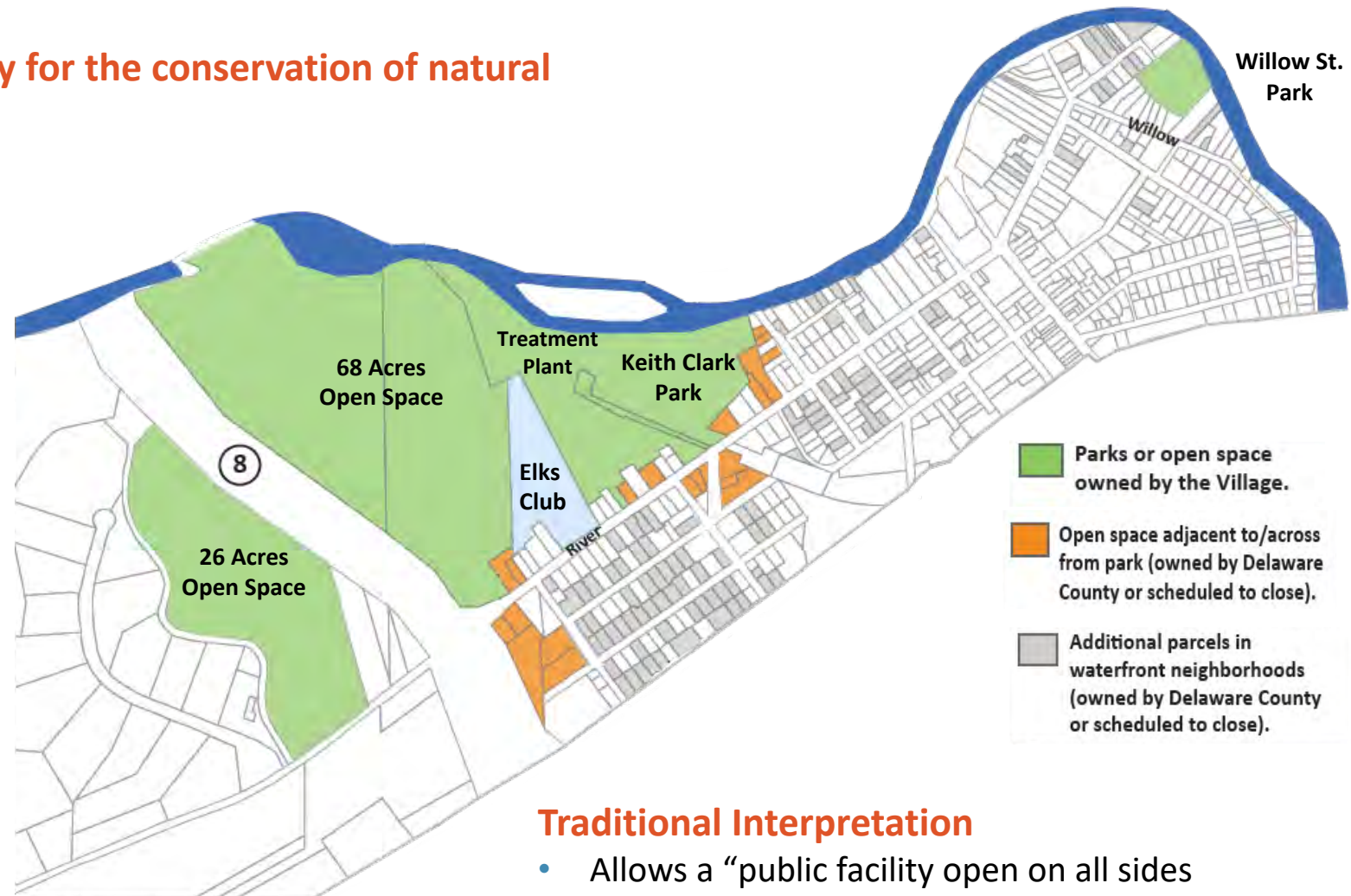
Possible Uses

- Parks for outdoor recreational activities
- Wetlands management
- Nature reserves
- Cultivation
- Grazing
- Camping
- Unpaved parking lots
- Buffer zones
- Rest rooms
- Other uses FEMA determines compatible

Challenges

FEMA is not likely to approve uses with extensive:

- plumbing
- utilities
- fencing
- permanent upright walls



Traditional Interpretation

- Allows a “public facility open on all sides compatible with open space”.



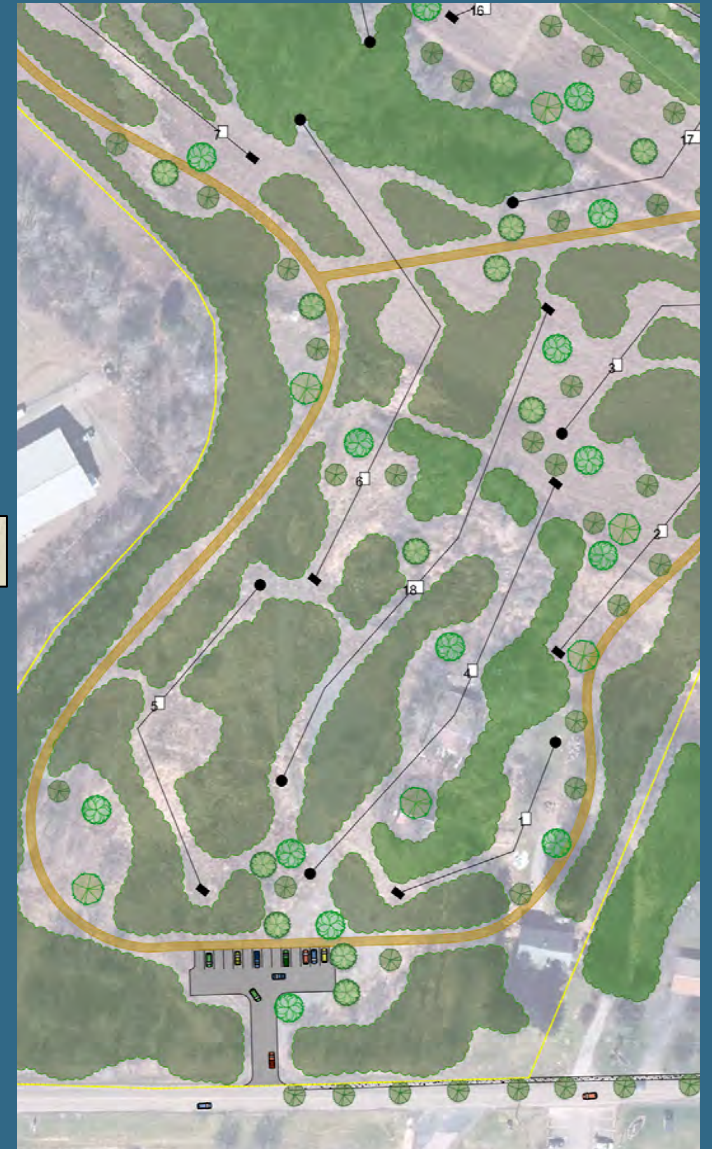
Preliminary Conceptual Plan

- Mix of active and passive uses.
- Focus on four season recreation.
- Commitment to design adaptive and accessible amenities.
- Includes educational signage and interpretative areas.
- Open Community Lawn.



Potential 18 Hole Disc Golf Course

- Disc Golf suggested by local resident.
- Fast growing sport among all ages.
- Local Disc Golf Clubs partner with community for operations/maintenance.
- Host tournaments year round – often as fundraiser for local charities.



Potential Soccer and Entertainment Complex

- Strong interest in youth soccer by families.
- Prefer one complex with fields for players of all ages.
- Need to leave clear channel for culverts to discharge stormwater under Route 8.
- With Veterans Memorial and Children's Garden, this use creates an active gateway.



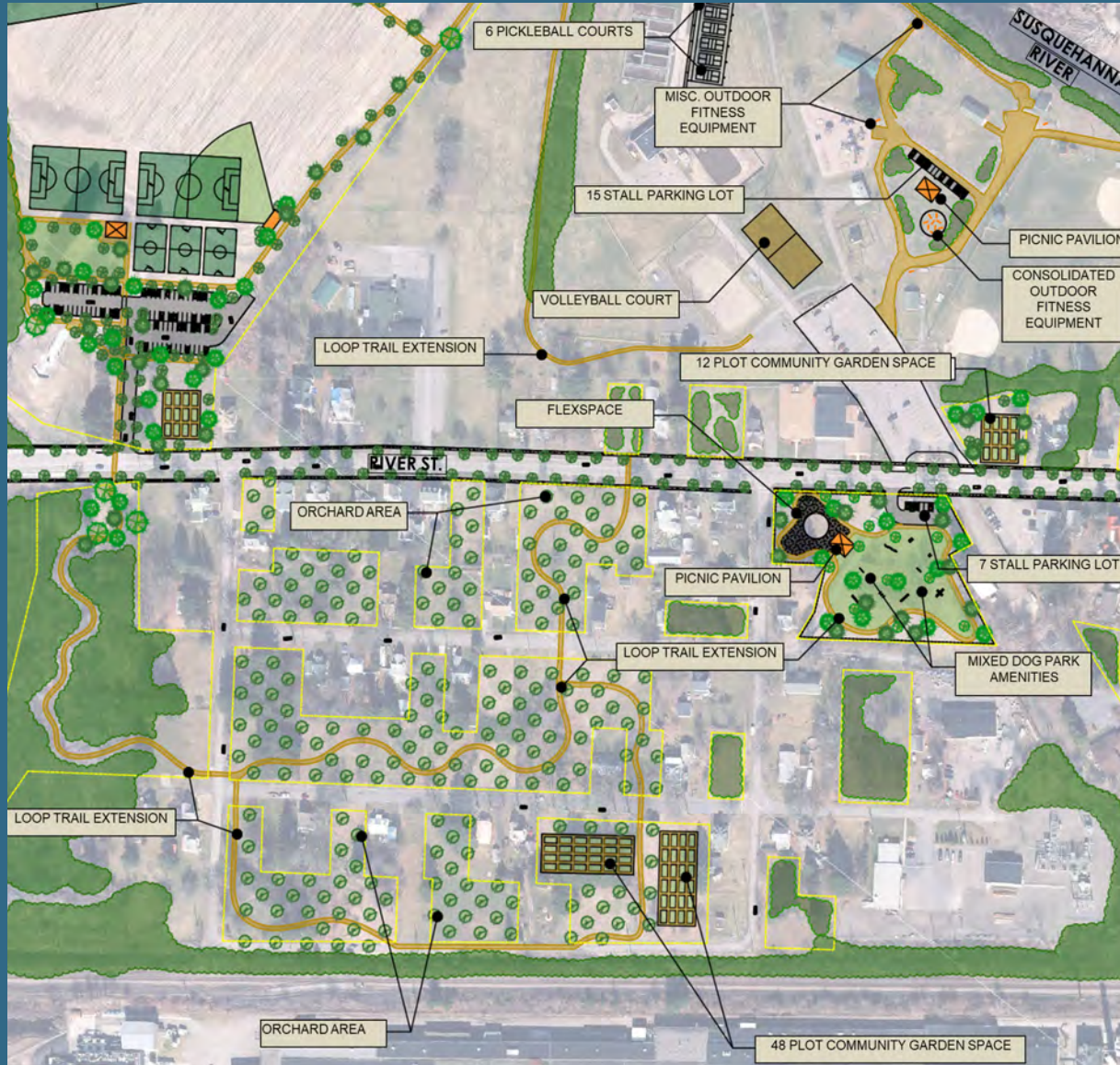
Potential Reuse of Public Lands

- Ability to partner soccer fields with entertainment /amphitheater area.
- Multiple alignments are possible.
- Village is consulting Elks Club regarding shared use.
- Subcommittee formed to evaluate feasibility event venue.



Potential Reuse of Public Lands

- Respect that some occupied homes remain in the buyout area.
- Design community gardens, orchards, berry gardens, children's gardens on public land.
- Provide meandering trails.
- Connect to multi component dog park and flex space opposite Keith Clark Park.
- Upgrade and enhance Keith Clark Park.



Willow Street/Walsh Park Potential Improvements

- Thomas Walsh Park, also known as Willow Street Park, with surrounding buyout parcels is location for future river access.
- Current soccer fields are in poor condition.
- Concept illustrates the site with a full-size field hockey field.





DISCUSSION AND NEXT STEPS

Brainstorming and Discussion

What Do You Think?

- What do you think of these uses for public waterfront land?
- What do you like?
- What questions do you have?
- What have we missed?
- What alternatives do you see?
- If money was no obstacle, what would you do first?



It's About The Vision

- What do you love about Sidney?
- What would you like to change?
- Where is the best place to meet up with a friend and go for a walk?
- What is your favorite outdoor activity?

When your vision is accomplished how will the waterfront sound, smell, feel, and look?



Next Steps

Work For January

- Outreach
- Focus Groups
- General and Youth Survey
- Workshop to Review Designs
- Aerial Photography
- Revised Concept Design
- Mutual Support Calls With Communities Managing Retreat

Work For February

- Revised Draft Vision
- Revised Recreation/Open Space Designs
- Workshop Three
- Final Strategy and Vision



Project Team

- The Village of Sidney
- The Nature Conservancy
- River Street Planning & Development
- PLACE Alliance Northeast
- Streamworks
- Skytop Digital Media
- Dr. Nicholas Pinter, U.C. San Diego

Go Fund Me

New flood warning gauges are needed to keep Sidney safe!

DONATE AT WWW.RESILIENT-SIDNEY.COM

- Please donate to replace two inoperable flood monitoring/warning gauges in Sidney and Sidney Center.
- Sidney High School students monitor and collect data from this network of rainfall and stream height gauges.
- This system provides Sidney with crucial advance warning of flood events.



Vision without action is merely a dream.

Action without vision passes the time.

Vision with action changes the world.

Joel Baker

HOLD THE VISION
TRUST THE PROCESS

Thank you

RESILIENSIDNEY@GMAIL.COM

WWW.RESILIENT-SIDNEY.COM