

# VILLAGE OF GREEN ISLAND

## Community Development Plan

August 2012



*Photo courtesy of jag9889 via Flickr*



The Chazen Companies  
TAP, Inc.  
Shelter Planning & Development. Inc.

## A Special Thanks...

*The Green Island Community Development Plan Committee would like to thank the many citizens of Green Island for contributing their ideas to the creation of this plan.*

### Consultant Team

The Chazen Companies

TAP, Inc.

Shelter Planning & Development, Inc.



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## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Study Area .....	3
Planning Process .....	5
Inventory & Analysis .....	9
Priority Plan Recommendations .....	30
Complementary Initiatives .....	49
Funding Strategy & Cost Estimates .....	52

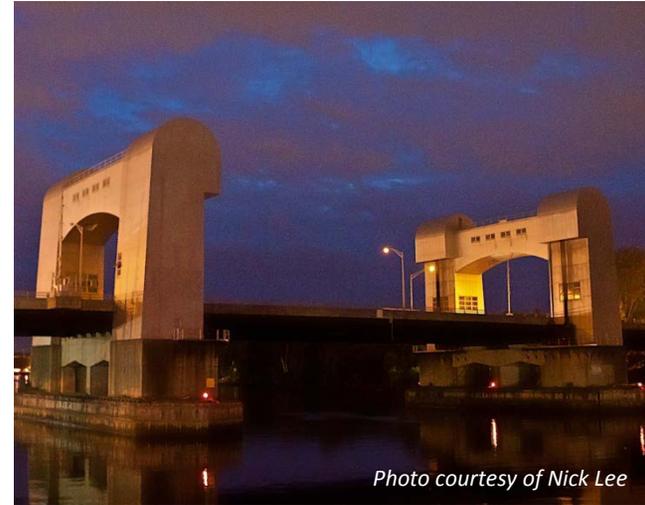
## Attachments

- A. Priority Community Improvement Cost Estimates
- B. Additional Housing & Community Improvement Considerations
- C. Public Workshop Summary

## Introduction

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Tucked along the banks of New York’s historic Hudson River, at the confluence of the fifth branch of the Mohawk River, and centrally located within the Capital Region, Green Island is a community that is rich in history. A regional epicenter of the Industrial Revolution, Green Island’s traditional development pattern is something that many communities now try to emulate. Today, a mix of young and old residents, professionals, entrepreneurs, and visitors fill its tree-lined streets any given day, making for a vibrant community experience. All the while the mighty Hudson River flows on by, serving as a constant reminder of Green Island’s origins and representing its continual evolution and future opportunities.



Although Green Island has been very successful in broadening its tax base and attracting new businesses such as Sealy Mattress and Ecovative Design (see page 18 Case Study), a decrease in its residential population (note that the 2010 US Census indicated a slight increase in population over the last decade), aging building stock, limited new homeownership opportunities, and limited service and retail businesses have reduced the number of housing options and has impacted its overall quality of life.

In an effort to reverse these trends, the Green Island Community Development Plan represents Green Island’s commitment to providing improved housing options and enhancing its community resources. By identifying priority initiatives and projects that focus on housing and infrastructure related improvements, the Green Island

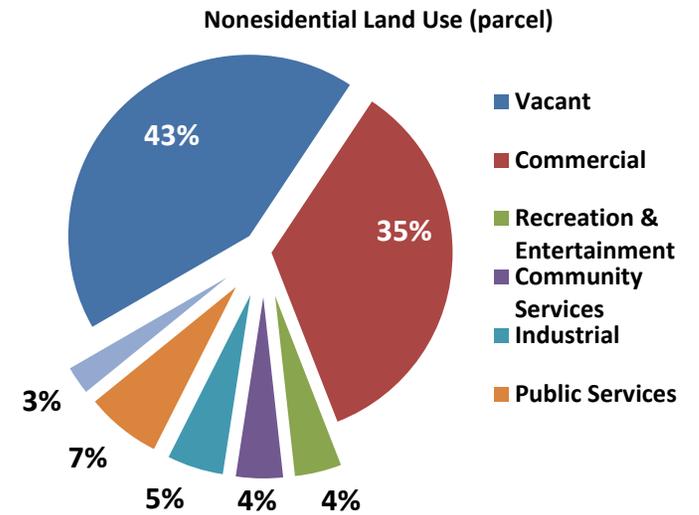
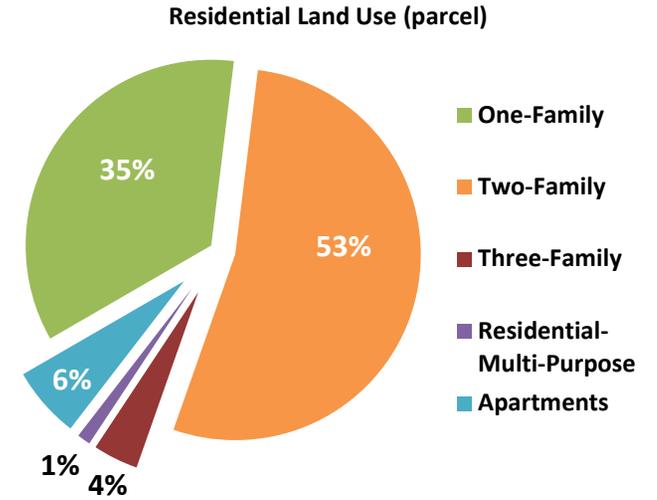
Community Development Plan represents the community's desire to ensure that there is a bright future for its current residents and for generations to come.



While the Green Island Community Development Plan study area encompasses the entire community, it primarily focuses on the more residential neighborhoods south of Tibbits Avenue. This area includes Green Island's main corridors; Albany Avenue, Hudson Avenue and Lower Hudson Avenue, and George Street, as well as some of its key community resources, Paine Street Park, Veterans Memorial Stadium, River Park, and the Hudson River waterfront. The Green Island Community Development Plan also acknowledges the important role Green Island's existing businesses will play in its revitalization.

## Study Area

The Green Island Community Development Plan study area encompasses the entire Village and Town of Green Island, which are coterminous municipalities. The western limits of the study area follow the municipal boundary along Interstate 787. The eastern limits of the study area parallel the Hudson River waterfront. Because of the project goals, the focus of this plan is on the more residential neighborhoods south of Tibbits Avenue. In total the study area is approximately 595 acres. The focus area south of Tibbits Avenue is approximately 270 acres and encompasses approximately 850 parcels (please note that there are approximately 878 parcels within Green Island). Land use within this area is mixed. Excluding select right-of-way and easement parcels, approximately 72 percent of properties are residential. Of these, 53 percent are two-family residences and 35 percent are one-family residences. The balance is a mix of three-family, residential multi-purpose, and apartments. Of the 239 nonresidential parcels, 43 percent are vacant and 35 percent are commercial. It is important to note that many of the vacant parcels are owned and used by nearby residents as yards and/or for storage sheds. The Study Area Figure (next page) illustrates the boundaries of the study area.



<Study area figure>

## Planning Process

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The figure below depicts the overall Green Island Community Development Plan planning process. A summary of the planning process is included in the following sections (next page).

### INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

- Demographic Analysis
- Economic Analysis
- Housing Analysis
- Community Resource & Land Use Analysis

### PUBLIC OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

- Committee Meetings
- Public Workshop(s)
- Multi-Media Outreach
- Stakeholder Interviews

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- Priority Housing Initiatives
- Priority Community Development Initiatives
- Cost Estimates
- Funding Opportunities

### *Green Island Community Development Plan Committee*

The plan Committee consisted of local officials and stakeholders that represented a broad spectrum of the community. The plan Committee met regularly throughout the planning process. The Committee gathered and examined information from many sources in order to develop the recommendations that are outlined within this plan. In addition to holding public workshop(s), the advisory Committee directly reached out to residents, local businesses owners, investment property owners, non-profits, and local and state agencies.



### *Inventory & Analysis*

The first step in the planning process was to conduct an inventory and analysis of Green Island’s existing housing and community resource conditions. This included a review of the following:

- Green Island real property (parcel) data
- Capital Region Multiple Listing Service (CRMLS) housing market information
- Geographic Information System (GIS) land use, transportation, and environmental resource data
- U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Census and American Community Survey (ACS) demographic and economic data
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and NYS Department of Labor wage and employment data
- Infill development calculations and community improvement cost estimates

In addition, the Committee's consultant team conducted several site evaluations in order to identify suitable locations for housing and mixed-used development opportunities as well as public and community infrastructure improvement opportunities.

### *Public Participation*

Providing opportunities for Green Island residents to take part in the development of the Green Island Community Development Plan was a vital part of the planning process. Public outreach efforts included stakeholder meetings and interviews with the following:

- Building Department and Code Enforcement officials
- Local investment property owners
- Local realtors
- Community non-profits and housing specialists
- Special need(s) housing providers
- Senior housing officials and senior residents
- Local business owners

The Committee also hosted two (2) well-attended public workshops at the Heatly School gymnasium on March 13, 2012 and June 6, 2012. In order to maximize public input, public workshop outreach included press releases in local newspapers, announcements in the Village newsletter, distribution of flyers, multimedia postings, and direct mailings.

The first public workshop included an overview of the planning process and a presentation of Green Island's demographic, employment, and housing characteristics. Following the presentation, participants were divided

into groups and took part in facilitated discussions about housing and community improvement needs. The Committee captured the public's input and used this information to develop its initial draft concept plans.



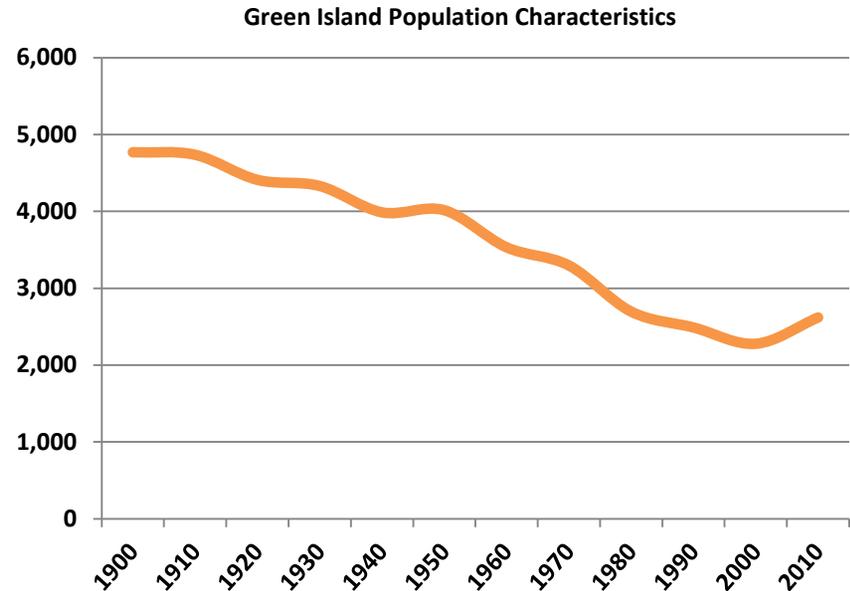
After preparing its draft concept plans, the Committee conducted an exercise in order to identify priority initiatives and projects. After this exercise the Committee hosted its second public workshop, which provided an opportunity for local residents, business owners, and stakeholders to offer their input on the findings. In support of the public workshop session, copies of the presentation, draft concept plans, and priority projects were posted on the Green Island website to allow for additional review and comment. For additional public workshop information please see Attachment C, Public Workshop Summary.

# Inventory & Analysis

## Demographics

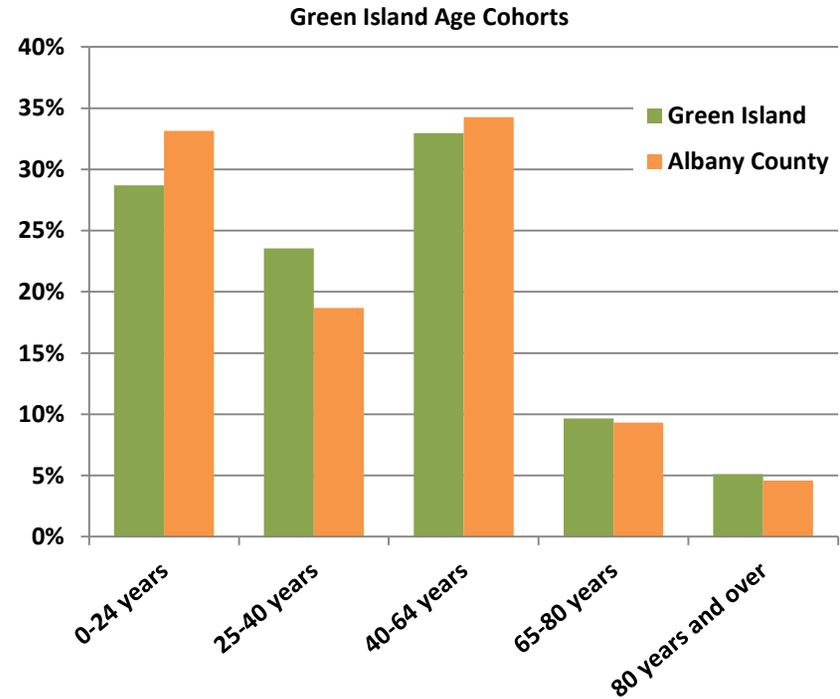
Although it has somewhat stabilized in recent years, Green Island’s population has significantly declined over the last 100-years. Green Island had over 4,700 residents in 1900. In 1950, it had approximately 4,000 residents. By 2000, just 50 years later, the Village’s population was almost less than half that. Green Island’s population has begun to stabilize with 2,620 people now calling Green Island home. A tightknit, walkable community, the more residential portion of Green Island has a population density of approximately 7,700 people per square mile. In comparison, Cohoes has a density of 4,300 people per square mile and Colonie has 1,400 people per square mile (Albany County’s overall density is approximately 570 people per square mile and New York State has approximately 415 people per square mile). Most of Green Island’s population occupies the southern extent of the community, below Tibbits Avenue.

As of the 2010 U.S. Census, there were approximately 1,381 females (52.7 percent) and 1,239 males (47.3 percent) living in Green Island. These figures slightly vary from those of Albany County’s where 51.7 percent of the population is female and 48.3 percent is male.



The median age in Green Island is 38.6 years, which is slightly higher than Albany County and New York State median ages, which are 36.8 and 35.9, respectively. Twenty-nine percent of Green Island’s population is under 25 and 57 percent is somewhere between 25 and 64 years old. In comparison, 33 percent of Albany County residents are under 25, while 53 percent are between 25 and 64 years old.

According to Cornell University’s Program on Applied Demographics, population projections for Albany County indicate an approximate six (6) percent decrease in the number of individuals that are less than 25 years of age by the year 2020 and two (2) percent decrease in 25 to 64 year olds. While the population of those under 25 is expected to stabilize from 2020 to 2040, the number of 25 to 64 year olds is projected to continue to decline by another eight (8) percent during the same period. Due to low immigration and birth rates, coupled with an aging population, the number of individuals that are 65 and older is projected to increase by 39 percent over the next 30 years. While Green Island’s 2010 cohorts (age brackets) are somewhat comparable to Albany County’s, it is difficult to extrapolate Green Island population projections from those prepared for Albany County by Cornell University. For example, Green Island’s small population and geographic size, existing buildout, and housing characteristics (as discussed below) are less conducive to significant increases and/or fluctuations in population.



According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are a total of 1,286 households in Green Island. Forty-six (46) percent of households are defined as “family households” and 54 percent are “nonfamily households.”<sup>1</sup> While a majority of family households were inhabited by husband and wife families with children that were less than 18 years of age (approximately 20 percent), a significant number were occupied by female householders (14 percent). Furthermore, as a percent of all family households, approximately 21 percent were occupied by female householders with children less than 18 years of age.

### Family & Nonfamily Household Characteristics

Households by Type	Total	% of Total Households
<b>Total households</b>	1,286	100
<b>Family households</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>46.0</b>
<b>Husband-Wife family</b>	349	27.1
With own children under 18 years	123	9.6
<b>Male householder, no wife present</b>	58	4.5
With own children under 18 years	35	2.7
<b>Female householder, no husband present</b>	185	14.4
With own children under 18 years	106	8.2
<b>Nonfamily households</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>54.0</b>
<b>Householder living alone</b>	549	42.7
Male	258	20.1
65 years and over	54	4.2
Female	291	22.6
65 years and over	114	8.9
<b>Households with individuals 65 years and over</b>	311	24.2

<sup>1</sup> According to the U.S. Census Bureau, household types are arranged into two groups: family households and nonfamily households. A family household contains at least two related persons and is categorized into three types: married couple; female householder with no spouse present; and male householder with no spouse present. A nonfamily household may contain only one person (the householder) or additional persons who are not relatives of the householder. Nonfamily households may be classified as either female nonfamily or male nonfamily households.

Nonfamily households, which include individuals that live alone or with nonrelatives, represent 54 percent of the total households within Green Island. A significant number of nonfamily households are occupied by individuals living alone (80 percent of all nonfamily households). Of those that lived alone, approximately 24 percent were 65 years of age or older.

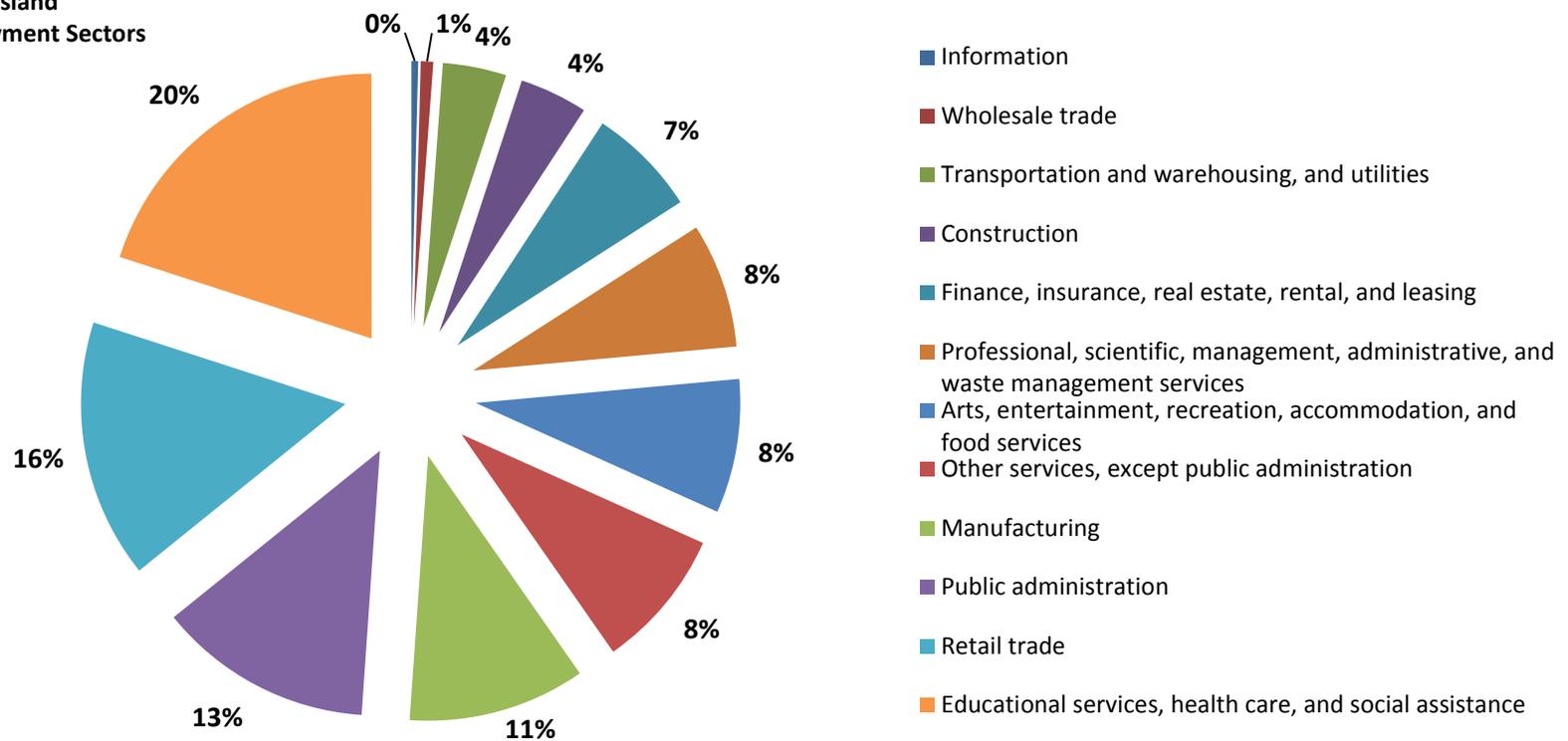
## Economics

U.S. Census employment data for Green Island (see Green Island Employment Sectors next page) shows that a majority of residents worked in the educational services, healthcare, and social assistance sector (20 percent). Approximately 16 percent of employed residents worked in the retail trade sector and 13 percent worked in the public administration sector. A significant number of Green Island's residents are also employed in the following sectors: manufacturing (11 percent); other services, except public administration (8 percent); arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services (8 percent); and professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services (8 percent).<sup>2</sup> According to recent figures, Green Island's current (2012) unemployment rate was 7.4 percent, which is lower than the national (8.1 percent) and state (9.1 percent) levels.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> "Other services, except public administration" comprises of establishments not classified as any other sector. Such services are primarily engaged in repairing, or performing general or routine maintenance on motor vehicles, machinery, equipment and other products to ensure that they work efficiently; providing personal care services, including laundry services, pet care services, and photo finishing services for individuals; organizing and promoting religious activities; supporting various causes through grant-making, advocating (promoting) various social and political causes, and promoting and defending the interests of their members.

<sup>3</sup> Unemployment rates are based U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and NYS Department of Labor figures. Note that the NYS Department of Labor develops localized unemployment rates by extrapolating county unemployment figures.

**Green Island  
Employment Sectors**

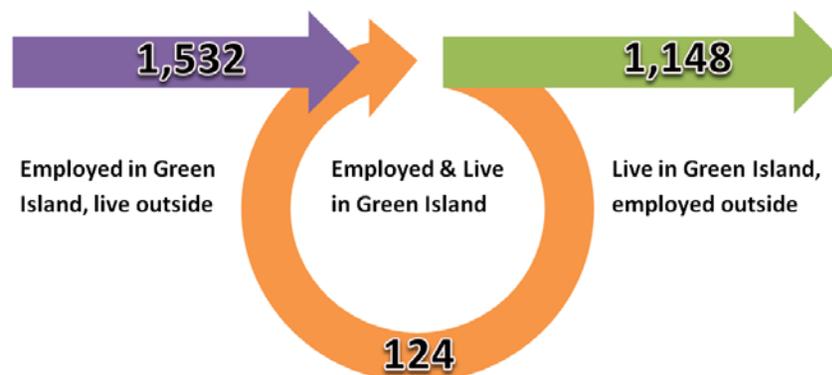


By comparison, educational services, and health care and social assistance is Albany County’s largest employment sector (29 percent). Followed by public administration (12 percent), retail trade (11 percent), and professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services (10 percent). Similar to Green Island, arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services accounts for eight (8) percent of employment within the County.

Economic development patterns do not mirror municipal boundaries; therefore it is important to examine employment from a regional perspective. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are more people who come to Green Island to work than there are residents who commute elsewhere to work.

Approximately 1,148 residents commute elsewhere, while 1,532 people travel to Green Island for work

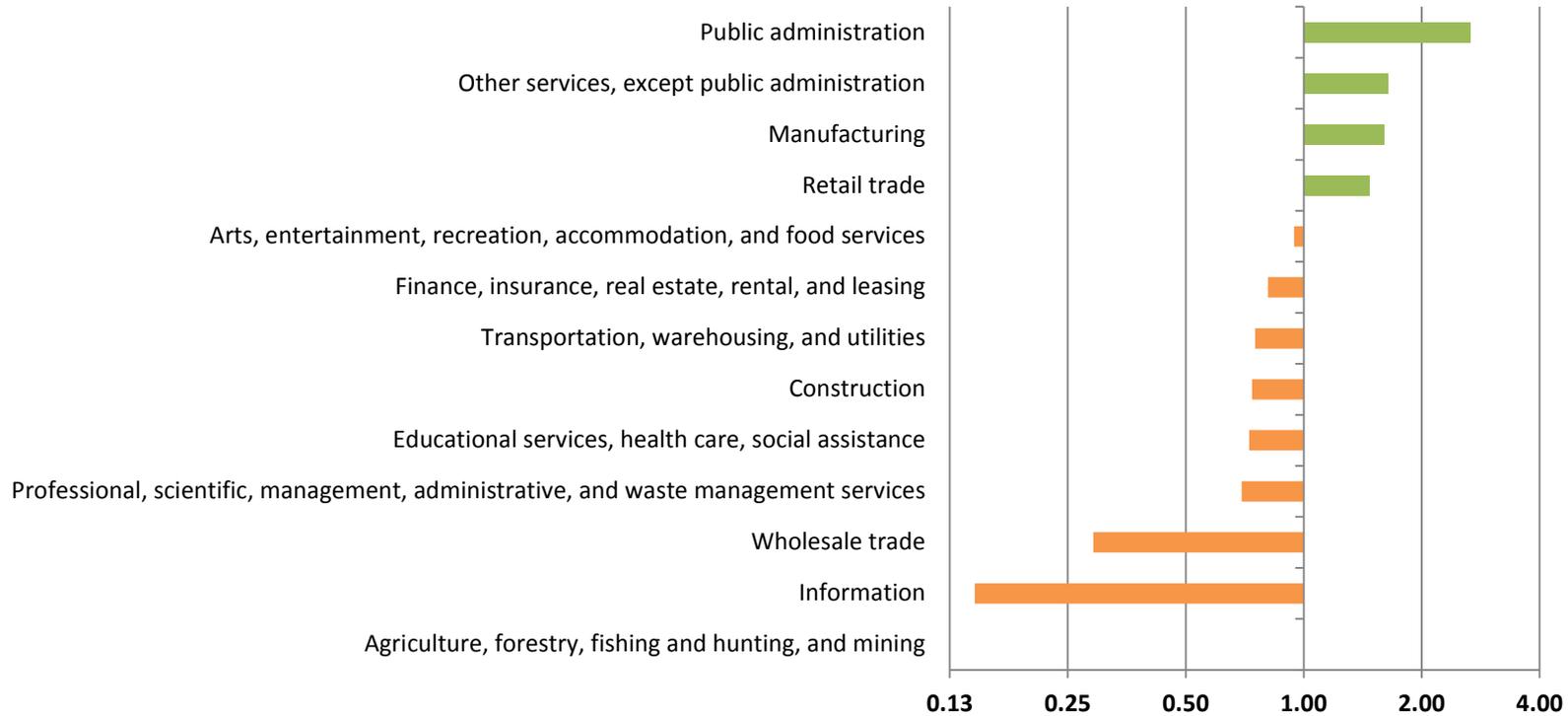
(124 people live and work in Green Island). A significant number of these workers are from Colonie (12.6 percent) and Troy (11.7 percent). Of the 1,272 primary jobs filled by Green Island residents, 24.7 percent located in Albany, 12.1 percent are in Troy, and 9.7 percent are located in Green Island.



While identifying where residents and nonresidents live and work live is valuable information, it is equally important to understand a community's base industries. Base industries are industries that export their goods and services from a particular region, whereas non-base industries are those that either support base industries or are underdeveloped. Base industries are identified by comparing employment characteristics to county, state, or national norms. Identifying a community's base industries is important because it may illustrate its comparative economic advantages and disadvantages within the larger region.

Base and non-base industries are identified using Location Quotients (LQs). A Location Quotient is the ratio of local employment within a specific industry to the employment within that same industry at a more regional level. Location Quotients are measured as follows: an LQ less than one (1) represents non-base industries; an LQ equal to one (1) represents industries that have the same share of employment as the reference area; and an LQ greater than one (1) represents base industries.

### Green Island Location Quotients

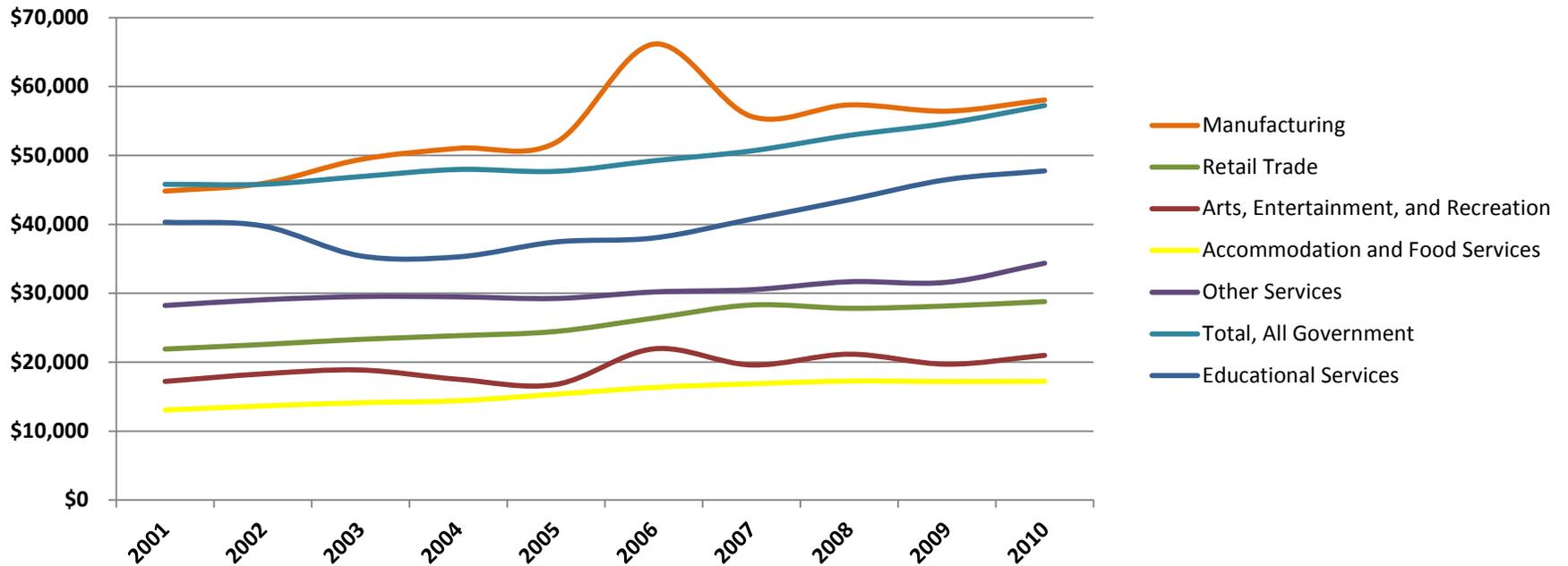


When compared to the Capital Region’s employment figures (i.e., Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady counties), predominant industries within Green Island are public administration (2.67), other services, except public administration (1.64), manufacturing (1.6), retail trade (1.47), transportation and warehousing (1.79), accommodation and food services (1.49), and construction (1.33).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Employment sectors are based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Other services, except public administration, include establishments engaged in providing services not specifically provided for elsewhere in the classification system. Establishments in this sector are primarily engaged in activities such as promoting or administering religious activities, advocacy, providing drycleaning and laundry services, personal care services, and pet care services.

While approximately 48 percent of Green Island’s residents work within its base industries, it is important to note that very few of these jobs are actually within Green Island. However, such base industry and major sector employment information, when coupled with relevant wage data, provides a better understanding of a community’s standard of living. In addition, wage information may also help identify industrial sectors that offer competitive salaries, which in turn provides positive externalities for the community. Manufacturing, government, and educational services offered the highest wages among Green Island’s top industries and sectors (above \$45,000). Other services, retail trade, arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services offered the lowest wages among Green Island’s top industries and sectors (below \$35,000).

**Wages for Major Green Island Employment Sectors**



Because a significant number of Green Island residents work in employment sectors that tend to have lower wages, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), approximately 57 percent of incomes qualify as low to moderate. Based on HUD standards, a low to moderate income equals 30 to 80 percent of a region’s median family income levels (MFI). For the Capital Region, the moderate income limit (80 percent of MFI) is just below \$45,000. For a family of four (4), low to moderate income levels range from \$23,450 (30 percent of MFI) to \$62,500 (80 percent of MFI). While homelessness is not a prevalent issue in Green Island, high poverty rates indicate that some people may be “at risk” for homelessness. According to recent figures Green Island has a poverty rate of 17.7 percent, which is higher than the state level of 14.9 percent. While these figures are discouraging, it is important to note that Green Island’s unemployment rate is 5.3 percent, which well below the national and state unemployment rate, and its low to moderate income rates make it eligible to receive funding assistance for a variety of housing and infrastructure related projects.

### *Employment Opportunities*

In an effort to increase and diversify its tax base, Green Island has been very successful in attracting new businesses to the community. A variety of businesses ranging from retail stores to large manufacturers have chosen to locate in or around the Island Park industrial area (north of Tibbits). This includes companies like Best Fire, Ecovative Design (see case study next page), Silhouette Optical, and Sealy Mattress. These small to large-scale employers offer a mix of professional, technical and manufacturing jobs, offering quality job opportunities for Green Island residents. While Green Island officials encourage management to hire locally, there is no formal program or incentives to link employers to potential employees.

## Case Study: Ecovative Design

Ecovative Design manufactures a variety of sustainable products, from insulation to packaging to disposable flip-flops, by using mycelium, a fungal network of thread-like cells.



The company found ideal space at Island Park in 2009: the site is close to Route 787, and the Green Island Power Authority supplies affordable electricity, which fits into the company's sustainability mission, according to Gavin McIntyre, chief scientist and co-founder. Ecovative also does business with several other Island Park residents, including Comfort Winair, the wholesaler of air handling equipment and GCS, with its expertise in robotics.

Ecovative employs 48 full-time and about 15 part-time employees who are at least college graduates. Half of employees are from Troy, since many are Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) graduates.

Before moving to Green Island, Ecovative Design was an incubator business at Rensselaer's Emerging Ventures Ecosystem (EVE).

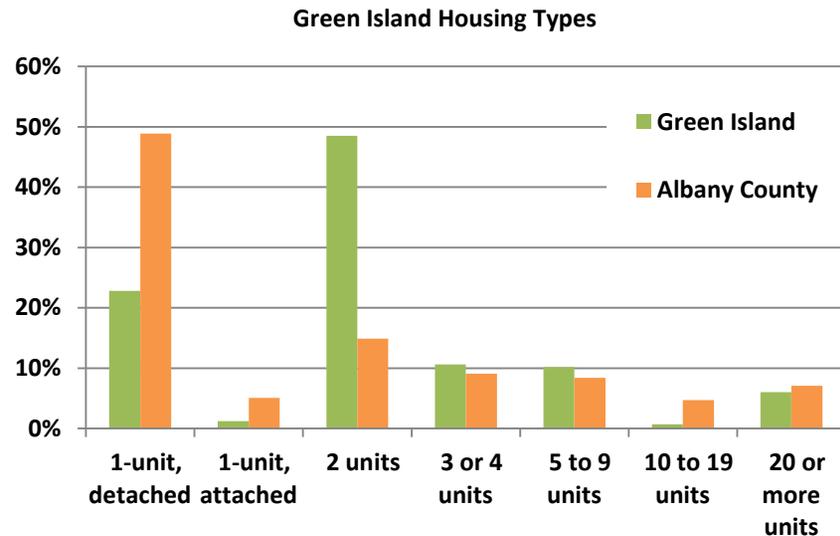
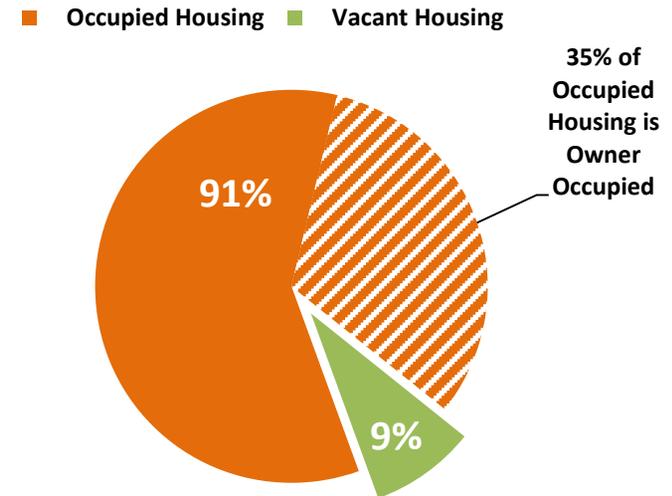
## Housing

### Housing Occupancy & Type

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, of the 1,296 housing units in Green Island, 91.3 percent were occupied and 8.7 percent were vacant (approximately 45.9 percent of vacant housing units were available for rent at the time of the 2010 U.S. Census). Of the occupied housing units, 35 percent were owner occupied (450 units). In comparison, approximately 57 percent of Albany County's occupied housing was owner occupied.

Approximately 48.5 percent of Green Island's 1,296 housing units were part of a two-family dwelling. The next most common housing types were single-family (22.8 percent), three-four family (10.6), and five-nine family (10.2) dwellings. In comparison, of the 137,751 housing units within Albany County, predominate housing types were detached single-family (48.9 percent) and two-family (14.9 percent) dwellings.

While the number of owner occupied units is somewhat low, U.S. Census Bureau (2010) figures indicated that the number of residents living in owner occupied

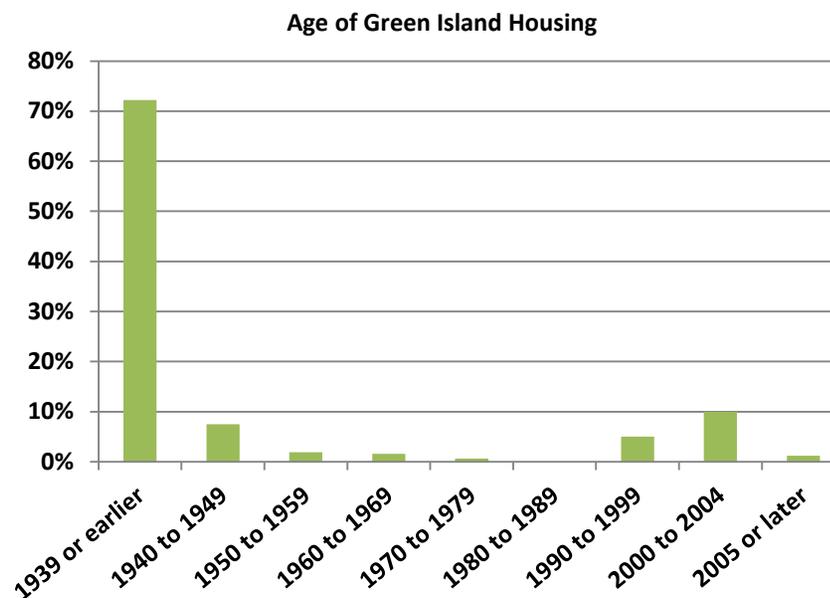


housing units accounted for approximately 40 percent of Green Island’s population, which indicates that the number of individuals living in renter occupied housing units (1.89 persons per unit) tends to be less than owner occupied units (2.31 persons per unit). In addition, housing tenure data illustrates that renter occupied housing units have an increasingly higher turnover rate and investment property owners have noted that they had a higher number of available units. Several investment property owners suggested that a general decline in housing quality and an inability to find good tenants as major influences behind this trend.

Although Green Island’s owner occupancy rates are low, it is important to note that there are approximately 575 residential parcels in Green Island (not including parcels with apartment complexes). Given the fact that there are 450 owner occupied housing units in Green Island, approximately 78 percent of dwelling units have an owner residing in them. This figure is attributable to the high number of multifamily dwellings within Green Island.

### *Age of Housing*

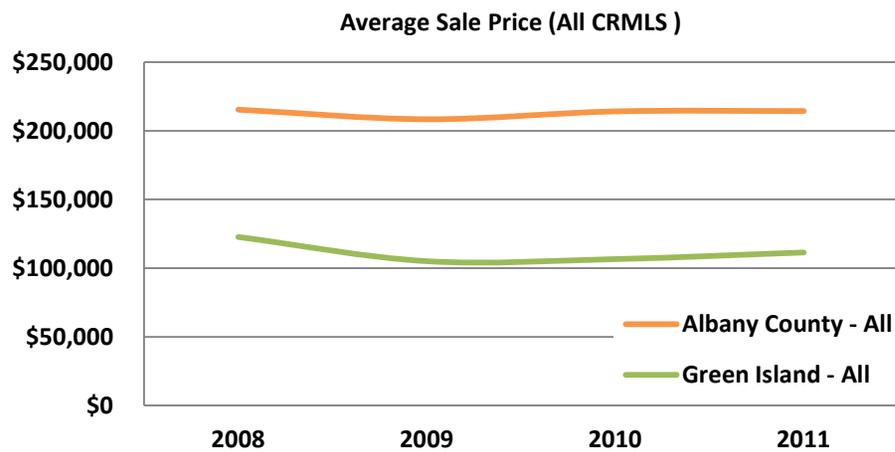
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 72 percent of Green Island’s housing units were built before 1940. During the next decade housing construction declined exponentially and remained low until the 1990’s, with only 11.6 percent (150) housing units built from 1940-1989. However, the number of housing units has slightly increased since 1990, with 16.2 percent of housing units constructed from 1990 to today. Despite the rise in new construction, approximately 83.8 percent of Green Island’s housing stock is greater than 30-years old.



### Housing Values & Market Characteristics

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the median housing value (2010) for owner occupied units within Green Island was \$121,200, whereas Albany County’s median housing value for owner occupied units was \$213,300. A significant portion (62.5 percent) of Green Island’s owner occupied housing units range in value from \$50,000 to \$150,000.

While Green Island’s housing values appear to be affordable in comparison to the region, there is a dearth of real-estate listings and little land for redevelopment. A review of current homes sales indicates that there are five (5) houses currently on the market. In addition, a small number of individuals control a significant portion of Green Island’s rental units. Anecdotally these owners have indicated that they are unlikely to sell in the near future. Realtors and others say that prospective buyers like the small-town feel of Green Island and favor the local school system. Low-cost utilities also help sell people on living in Green Island.



A review of the Capital Region Multiple Listing Service (CRMLS) closed sale price data for all housing types reflects the U.S. Census Bureau median housing value figures. Since 2008, Green Island’s sale prices have averaged approximately \$111,000. Albany County has had an average sale price of \$213,000. While the advertised condition of many of the

properties listed for sale in Green Island since 2008 have been either “very good” or “excellent,” it is worth noting that the percent of expired sales (properties that were pulled off the market) was somewhat higher when compared to Albany County, particularly among single-family dwellings. Although there are many variables that may influence this fact, it often reflects low demand, overpricing, customer dissatisfaction, or a combination of these factors.

Unlike housing values and sale prices, Green Island median rental rates are similar to Albany County. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), median rental rates for Green Island and Albany County were \$840 and \$865, respectively. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) indicates that these rates are below the fair market value for a two-bedroom unit. Several investment property owners indicated that they rent one-bedroom units for \$500 to \$600 a month.

#### Capital Region Fair Market Value Estimates

Efficiency	1-Bedroom	2-Bedroom	3-Bedroom	4-Bedroom
\$687	\$713	\$870	\$1,041	\$1,138

Based on tenant and investment property interviews and U.S. Census figures, Green Island tenants tend to be mobile and younger than homeowners. While rental rates are low, turnover is high; investment property owners noted that tenants stay approximately three (3) to five (5) years or less. However, some tenants have occupied their rental unit for over 25 years.

Compared to its larger neighboring communities, Green Island has only a handful of problem properties, many of which are owned by individuals who do not reside in the community. Properties in the first year of foreclosure currently amount to 18.

## *Housing Affordability*

At first glance, one might believe that housing costs in the area are, by comparison, very affordable. However, housing costs need to be compared to area incomes to obtain a realistic picture of housing affordability. While housing values and rents are low or below the fair market value, many homeowners and tenants are still burdened by high housing costs and expenses.

Housing burden is a measure of one's cost of housing relative to their income. It is generally accepted by both lending institutions and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that housing costs are reasonable (or affordable) when a family pays no more than 30 percent of their gross household income on housing costs. Housing costs for single-family home ownership include principal, interest, taxes and insurance (PITI). Housing expense for the rental market is defined as contract rent plus basic utilities and fuel (heat, hot water, electricity, cooking fuel, sewer and water).



According to U.S. Census figures, 72 percent of home owners within Green Island spent less than 30 percent of their monthly gross income on housing, while 28 percent spent 30 percent or more of their monthly gross income on housing. It is interesting to note that 42.2 percent of all those owners who lived in housing units in Green Island did not have a mortgage. This may explain the higher percentage of those paying less than 30 percent of their income on housing costs. This may be attributed to long-term and/or elderly home owners that have likely

paid off their mortgages, or live in homes handed down through generations. However, it should be noted that many of these individuals likely live on fixed incomes. For those who rent in Green Island, housing burden figures are somewhat bleak, with about 41 percent of all renters paying more than 30 percent of their income on rental costs (including utilities).

As noted earlier, a majority of Green Island residents commute to work. Approximately 80 percent do so using their own personal transportation. As the cost of transportation continues to increase it has a direct impact on household finances. As such, a more accurate measure of affordability, beyond the standard method of assessing only housing costs, takes into account both the cost of housing as well as the cost of transportation. Dividing these costs by the representative income illustrates the overall “cost burden” placed on a typical household. While housing alone is traditionally deemed affordable when consuming no more than 30 percent of income, the Center for Neighborhood Technology defines affordability when housing and transportation costs combined consume no more than 45 percent of income. With an average household transportation cost of \$11,888 a year, many Green Island residents housing and transportation cost burden exceeds the 45 percent threshold.<sup>5</sup>

### *Assessing Housing Affordability*

For homeowners, the banking industry norm is that housing is affordable if the monthly principal, interest, taxes and insurance (PITI) payment is not greater than 30 percent of the homeowner’s income. In order to determine what homeowners can pay for a mortgage, a simple assessment of Green Island’s median income and housing costs was made. Following HUD standards, this assessment also included an evaluation of affordable mortgages for those who earn 30 to 80 percent of Green Island’s median family income (\$57,132).

<sup>5</sup> Based on U.S. Census Bureau 2010 data and Center for Neighborhood Technology H + T Affordability Index (<http://www.htaindex.org/>).

According to this assessment, families that make approximately 60 percent of the median income (just below \$35,000) can afford a mortgage for a Green Island median priced home (please note that mortgages typically cover 80 to 100 percent of a housing price). According to U.S. Census figure (2010), approximately 30 percent of Green Island families earn less than \$35,000 a year. The table below indicates that those families making low to very low incomes (approximately 20 percent of all families) are unable to afford a median priced home.

### Green Island Estimated Affordable Mortgage/Home Price

	Very Low Incomes	Low Incomes	Moderate Incomes	Median Incomes
<b>Percent of Median Family Income</b>	30%	50%	80%	100%
<b>Annual Income</b>	\$17,139	\$28,566	\$45,705	\$57,132
<b>Monthly Income</b>	\$1,428	\$2,380	\$3,808	\$4,761
<b>% of Income for PITI</b>	30%	30%	30%	30%
<b>Affordable PITI Monthly Payment*</b>	\$428	\$714	\$1,143	\$1,428
<b>Affordable Monthly Mortgage Payment**</b>	\$300	\$500	\$800	\$1000
<b>Affordable 30-Year Mortgage @ 4.5% Interest</b>	\$59,197	\$98,662	\$157,859	\$197,324
<b>Green Island Median Home Price</b>	\$121,200	\$121,200	\$121,200	\$121,200
<b>Price-Difference from Median</b>	\$(62,003)	\$(22,538)	\$36,659	\$76,124

\*Payment includes estimated monthly tax, insurance, and PMI rates for Green Island.

\*\*Figures do not include tax, insurance, and PMI rates.

For renter households, a comparable method was used to assess affordable rental rates. According to these calculations an estimated 30 percent of residents could not afford the median (gross) rent (\$840) within Green

Island. For household income groups that are 80 percent of the median household income and above, the respective affordable rental rate exceeded the median rent by \$303.

### Green Island Estimated Affordable Rental Rate

Percent of Median Family Income	30%	50%	80%	100%
Annual Income	\$17,139	\$28,566	\$45,705	\$57,132
Monthly Income	\$1,428	\$2,380	\$3,808	\$4,761
% of Income for Rent and Utilities	30%	30%	30%	30%
Affordable Rent Payments	\$428	\$714	\$1,143	\$1,428
Median Rental Price	\$840	\$ 840	\$840	\$840
Affordable Price-Difference from Median	\$(412)	\$(126)	\$303	\$588

Whether rental rates in Green Island are too high or too low is a matter of perspective, with both tenants and investment property owners naturally choosing opposing views. Data also tends to support either position. While several investment property owners indicated that they rent one-bedroom units for \$500 to \$600 a month, which is an affordable rate for those families earning somewhere between 30 to 50 percent of the median income, some are unable to afford such rates and require direct housing assistance. According to HUD, it allocates 46 Section 8 housing vouchers to Green Island. Forty-one (41) have been issued, and there is currently a small waiting list for the program.

Some affordable housing opportunities exist in the River’s Edge Apartments on Center Island, which was built in 2002-2003. The 189-unit complex was intended to help fill the void of luxury apartments in Troy, Green Island, Watervliet and surrounding areas. However, as part of a funding program thirty-eight apartments are reserved

for a limited time period for low-income residents. According to the property owners, tenants are largely from Albany and Rensselaer counties and are a diverse group that includes professionals, graduate students, retirees and young families. Approximately 30 percent to 35 percent of units turn over each year.

### *Senior & Special Needs Housing*

Approximately 15 percent of Green Island residents are 65 years or older. Seniors who participated in the Community Revitalization Plan stakeholder meetings indicated that they were largely satisfied to either own or rent their own homes, but that home repairs are often burdensome. However, several participants noted that they would have limited options if they had to leave their current residence. Regardless, data suggests that a gap exists between affordable and higher-end housing, with several seniors conceding that they would be unable to afford what is typically charged for rent.

In 2000, the Village of Green Island developed 13 senior apartments in the former St. Joseph's School. Rent for a one-bedroom apartment ranges from \$236 to \$390 monthly, and for a two-bedroom unit, \$430 to \$542. The maximum yearly income for an eligible individual is \$23,150. According to the Watervliet Housing Authority (which now manages the facility) there is a persistent waiting list, with 20 seniors currently registered. Conversely, the higher-end Cornerstone apartments were built in 2004 for older (aged 55 and older) residents who wanted to reside in Green Island, according to the owner. Currently, a third of the 34 units are rented by individuals who lived in Green Island before moving to Cornerstone.



Demand for homes for people with special needs appears low, but Green Island’s built environment may prevent obvious modifications to make accessibility easier for those with disabilities. More specifically, because a significant portion of Green Island’s housing stock exceeds 30-years in age, modifications for accessibility are limited, and many options will require some degree of creativity. Green Island poverty rates suggest that some individuals may be “near” homeless (i.e., individuals or households that may require housing assistance in the near future). While many of these issues are often addressed by individuals, families, and/or county and state agencies, opportunities to partner with such organizations as Capital District Center for Independence and the Travelers Aid Society in Albany, which provide a variety of housing and disability related services, should be considered.

### Community Resources & Infrastructure



Green Island’s recreational facilities, community amenities, institutions, Hudson River waterfront, and walkability are essential components to its quality of life. Paine Street Park, River Park, Veterans Memorial Stadium, the Collar City Bridge recreational facilities, and Heatly School help to attract and retain residents, visitors, and businesses alike. Connecting these resources is a network of narrow, pedestrian-scaled streets bordered by tree-lined sidewalks and historic homes and buildings.

Like its Albany County neighbors, much of Green Island’s streetscape conditions range from good to very poor condition. Furthermore, given the community’s somewhat limited tax base and financial resources, many recreational facilities are in need of

improvements. Green Island acknowledges the importance of these resources and has systematically made improvements in recent years. This includes reconstruction of Cohoes Avenue, the revitalization of River Park, and a planned new sprinkler pool at Paine Street Park. Green Island recently secured monies to address utility, infrastructure, and pedestrian safety related issues along Albany Avenue, which is one of its more important gateways and transportation corridors.



*Example of redeveloped sidewalks along South Street in Glens Falls, NY*

During the Green Island Community Development Plan public workshops, participants identified additional need for pedestrian safety and streetscape improvements along roadways including Arch Street, Albany Avenue, Cohoes Avenue, George Street, and Hudson Avenue in order to enhance quality of life and attract private investments. Recognizing the need to accommodate all Green Island residents along its roadways, the Committee adopted a more comprehensive approach towards roadway improvements. Often referred to as a “complete streets” approach, this strategy includes access and accommodations for everyone (i.e., pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers), and takes into account the needs of people with disabilities, the

elderly, and children. In addition, a complete street includes “green” design elements such as alternative stormwater management features or landscaping with native plants that can help offset carbon emissions and shade roadways reducing heat island effects.

## Priority Plan Recommendations

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The Green Island Community Development planning process incorporated extensive public input. Throughout the process, the Committee took note and cataloged individuals' issues, ideas, and concerns. The Committee organized like ideas, and with the aid of a prioritization exercise, ranked recommendations based on their agreed level of importance, and selected a series of 'Priority Projects' that would serve as catalysts for housing and community revitalization. In developing these Priority Projects, the Committee considered several factors including the need to increase the type and quality of housing options, improve the existing housing stock, create more safe and appealing streets, and attract new private and public partnerships and investments. The goal of the following housing and community improvement recommendations are to promote infill development, addressing housing issues, and to ultimately enhance Green Island's quality of life. The locations of several of these initiatives are captured on the priority project and streetscape improvement figures located at the end of this section.

### Priority Housing Initiatives

#### 1. Facilitate Infill Development Opportunities

In effort to provide additional housing opportunities, Green Island should help to facilitate the construction of infill development opportunities at the following locations:

- The southern extent of the former Ford Plant site (along Tibbits Avenue);
- The existing railroad property and right-of-way along Cannon Street, particularly around Paine Street Park;
- The newly cleared southern end of Center Island;

- The southern portion of scrap metal recycling facility along Tibbits Avenue (dependent upon the support/cooperation of current landowner); and,
- The D & H Corporation owned property behind Hamilton Street.

These infill opportunities may include a mix of housing types, commercial spaces, professional offices, and/or municipal uses. While each of these locations represents a new economic development opportunity, the Committee acknowledges that areas along Tibbits Avenue (the current parking area on the former Ford Plant site) and Cannon Street present the greatest opportunity because of the nature of their ownership and their proximity to community resources such as Paine Street Park, River Park, and Heatly School. In addition, the development potential of these locations is sound. Based on a preliminary site analysis, the Cannon Street location could accommodate approximately 12 (3,000 SF) to 24 (1,500 SF) housing units. It is envisioned that the housing units would help frame Paine Street Park as a “village green”



and complement Green Island’s historic architecture. The development of this site would require the narrowing of Cannon Street and installation of sidewalks, crosswalks, and lighting.

Similar to the Cannon Street location, the former Ford Plant Site offers development potential because of the existing ownership, site conditions, and waterfront access. While much of the former Ford site is undergoing environmental remediation, the parking lot along Tibbits Avenue is considerably closer to being “shovel ready.” This site also offers an opportunity to create a mixed use transition between the more residential portions of Tibbits Avenue (along its southern side) and the more commercial and industrial portions along its northern side. As such, it is envisioned that the development of this location would not only help to frame Paine Street Park as a village green, but would also include a mix of uses, including housing, commercial, and office spaces. Based on a preliminary analysis of this site, approximately 140,000 SF of mixed use development could be constructed. The



concept images prepared for this site (previous page) depicts an attractive village setting that is well connected to Paine Street Park and the waterfront and is conducive to pedestrian activities.

Green Island, like many communities, does not have the financial resources to undertake these development projects on their own, therefore, it will likely be necessary to attract private investments and partners. Green Island should consider conducting preliminary work such as revising local zoning to allow for desired types of development, preparing pro formas to demonstrate a project's financial feasibility, developing concept site plans, or helping to secure funds and/or financial assistance on behalf of a developer as measures to attract private partnership opportunities.

Green Island should also help facilitate development at the remaining sites (as identified above). However, because of limited resources, efforts should focus on the former Ford Plant and Cannon Street sites. Assisting with the development of the remaining sites should be revisited as opportunities present themselves.

## **2. Develop a Rental Registry Program**

According to investment property owners, residents, and local officials, the overall decline in housing stock has had an impact on Green Island's high quality of life. While Green Island's rental rates are somewhat affordable, an increased level of turnover, a lack of ongoing building maintenance, and a diminishing return on property investments has contributed to a decline in housing quality and an increase in the number of quality of life and code enforcement related issues within the community.

In order to reverse these trends it is recommended that Green Island adopt a rental registry program that is similar to its neighboring communities of Watervliet and Cohoes. Rental registry programs help

to ensure that residents are afforded quality housing and that there is accountability when it comes to safety and property maintenance issues. These programs often include the following components:

- A mandatory registry of all rental units and investment property owners with the community.
- Routine inspection of rental units and the issuance of “Residential Occupancy Permit” (ROP) prior to new tenant occupancy. Rental units and/or building inspections would focus on New York State building code compliance, local regulations, and health and human safety related issues. It is suggested that the ROP process recognize that not all code violations are equal and that the implementation of such a program requires flexibility. Ultimately, the program is not intended to be punitive, and should focus on improving housing conditions. In both Watervliet and Cohoes, School officials help administer the program by requiring evidence of inspections when new students are being registered within their respective districts. If permits are absent, the districts notify the local code enforcement officer.



- A database of rental unit and/or building conditions, which may be used to secure funding for housing programs and/or necessary maintenance and repairs. See Priority Housing Initiative six (6) and the Funding & Implementation Strategy sections (below) for additional funding information.
- Programmatic assistance to investment property owners with repairs and/or compliance related issues.

In order to address local resource and capacity related issues that may be associated with the administration of a rental registration program, Green Island should develop a fee schedule that offsets inspection costs and/or code compliance efforts. Green Island could leverage its existing staff by formalizing a team approach between the police, fire, and building departments, who could work together on inspections and coordinate on violations and maintenance issues. Finally, the program could help to identify investment property owners that may wish to sell to prospective buyers, particularly their own tenants. According to Watervliet officials, since the adoption of their program they are slowly seeing improvement of building conditions as rental standards have been raised.

### **3. Continue to Utilize New York Main Streets Funds**

Green Island should continue to assist building owners through New York State’s Homes & Community Renewal Main Street Programs in order to enhance community aesthetics and improve existing building conditions. Green Island has successfully helped with the redevelopment of buildings through this program in the past. Given the importance of Green Island’s appeal to residents, business owners, visitors, and potential investors, it should continue to leverage this program to the fullest extent. This effort should focus on buildings that front on key community gateways and corridors including Arch Street, Albany Avenue, Cohoes Avenue, George Street, Hudson Avenue, and Tibbits Avenue. Where applicable, such revitalization projects should



incorporate not only structural, weatherization, and utility upgrades and improvements, but should include design elements that reflect Green Island’s historic architectural characteristics.

#### **4. Continue to Formalize Strategies for Pursuing and Administering Housing Related Funding Opportunities**

Recognizing the complexity of applying for and administering the many housing related funding opportunities, Green Island should continue to develop a more formal method of pursuing the housing and improvement recommendations outlined in this plan. Funding opportunities such as NYS Homes & Community Renewal Community Renewal’s (NYSHCR) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Access to Home, Main Street Program, or Albany County Rural Housing Alliance’s (ACRHA) Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC) grants have been used in the past and should continue to be used for a variety of complementary housing renovation or infill development related projects. However, the complexity of these programs often requires the expense of significant municipal resources, tracking of local matches, extensive documentation, and public outreach requirements. While Green Island currently coordinates many of these activities, it should consider additional strategies that result in a team approach that involves local officials, the building department, consultants, and the program representative from the respective funding agencies. Such a strategy would be tailored to the specific activity (e.g. rehabilitation, homeownership, etc.) and to the needs of the community. A typical housing rehabilitation program, for example, might involve the following components:

- **Local Program Manager or Committee** – An individual or committee that is solely dedicated to providing financial oversight of the program, performs application intake and solicitation, keeps technical team on task, and assures compliance with grant requirements.

- **Technical Team** – Often a consultant, they will provide day-to-day management of the program including contractor and homeowner mediation, program reporting, preparation of disbursement materials, inspections, construction monitoring, and project bidding.
- **Rehabilitation Specialist** – Will work with technical team, consultant or community, and the local building and codes department to develop specifications for project development and bidding and assist with inspections.
- **Environmental Consultants** – Third party contractors hired to survey environmental hazards such as lead, mold, radon, or asbestos.



At first glance this approach may appear to be very costly; however, many of the tasks identified above are already handled at the local level. This in turn may already satisfy the local matches that are often required by many of the funding sources. Although Green Island has experienced somewhat lackluster levels of participation in the past with some these programs, it is anticipated that the recommended rental registry program will increase the level of interest as investment property owners begin to make the necessary improvements to their

properties. As such, fees associated with the rental registry program may be used to help offset costs associated with providing technical assistance to property owners, applying for funds, or administering grants. As a first step, it is recommended that Green Island form a standing committee comprised of

local officials and stakeholders to identify the specific components and roles and responsibilities of this team approach. Additional information regarding funding may be found in the Funding Strategy & Cost Estimates section on page 52.

## 5. Advocate for Further Analysis of FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps

Current FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) indicates that a significant portion of Green Island is located with the 100-year floodplain. However, proposed revisions to the FIRM maps now include additional lands within the floodplain. While Green Island recognizes the importance of flood safety and preparedness, these revisions, if adopted, will significantly impact property owners, increasing flood insurance costs, and prompting further disinvestments in the community. According to FEMA officials, the proposed FIRM maps revisions are based on more local hydrological characteristics and do not necessarily take into consideration the complex system of flood controls along the Hudson and Mohawk rivers. It is strongly recommended that Green Island continue to advocate that any revisions to its FIRM maps take such controls into consideration when analyzing flooding potentials.



## 6. Develop a Comprehensive Aging in Place Program

Green Island has a sizable senior population. According to many of the seniors that were engaged in the planning process, they would like to remain in their homes as opposed to moving to senior housing or adult care facilities. Therefore, it is recommended that Green Island work with local, county, and state senior assistance, housing, and healthcare providers to prepare a comprehensive aging in place plan and program that may include the following elements:

- **Housing Affordability.** Because many seniors live on fixed incomes, housing affordability is an important part of any aging in place program. Green Island should continue to help identify ways to help make existing housing more affordable for its seniors. One approach could include the preparation of a fiscal impact analysis that evaluates the feasibility of additional NYS school tax relief (STAR) and senior citizen exemption programs. Both these programs allow local governments and school districts to reduce the amount of property taxes paid by qualifying senior citizens. Although senior citizen exemption may reduce the taxable assessment of a senior's home by as much as 50 percent (<http://www.tax.ny.gov/pit/property/exemption/seniorexempt.htm>), such programs should not be implemented unless they are fiscally solvent. As part of the feasibility analysis, potential revenue from new developments should be taken into consideration. In addition, Green Island should continue working with state and county agencies and non-profits to help educate seniors on a wider range of housing topics, from predatory lending issues and reverse mortgage opportunities.
- **Housing Modification & Maintenance Assistance.** Green Island can assist seniors with home modifications and repairs in a number of ways. This includes the implementation of the recommended rental registry program, which will insure that all of Green Island residents live in quality housing. This may also include utilizing many of the funding opportunities identified in the

Funding Strategy & Cost Estimates section below. Finally, Green Island may help to identify qualified contractors who are willing to provide affordable home repairs or offer flexible payment schedules.

- **Transportation & Mobility Assistance.** The Watervliet/Green Island trolley and Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) provide extensive transportation services to Green Island’s residents. This includes interconnections with one another’s service lines, bus stops at the Green Island Senior center and other points of interest, and reduced fares for seniors (\$0.75 a ticket). In addition to these services, Green Island could help coordinate other senior transportation opportunities, including visits to medical appointments.

In addition to these components, Green Island, in partnership with Albany County and Cohoes Senior Center, should continue to provide such additional assistance as “meals on wheels” services. Green Island should continue its registry program for seniors that wish to be periodically checked up on by local officials, particularly during extreme weather events. Finally, many of the streetscape revitalization recommendations that are outlined in the Priority Community Development Initiatives (below) are intended to make for a safer and universally accessible pedestrian environment. Such improvements will help to ensure senior mobility and civic engagement.



## Priority Community Development Initiatives

### 1. Revitalize Green Island's Streetscapes

Green Island's traditional development pattern is something that many communities now try to emulate. Its network of narrow, pedestrian-scaled streets that are bordered by tree-lined sidewalks and historic homes and buildings attract everyone from the elderly looking to downsize to the younger generations that desire authentic community experiences. However, much of Green Island's streetscape conditions are deteriorating. Because pedestrian access and mobility significantly impacts the quality of life of all Green Island residents and may help to attract new investments, it is recommended that it improve its existing streetscapes in a way that accommodates all users and modes of transportation. This initiative should focus on Green Island's gateways and corridors including Arch Street, Albany Avenue, Cohoes Avenue, George Street, Hudson Avenue, and Tibbits Avenue. This "complete streets" approach should include the following features and/or characteristics:

- **Pedestrian Access, Safety & Mobility.** This includes such design features as improved sidewalks, at grad curb bump-outs at key intersections, pedestrian islands within wider intersections, and crosswalks with high contrast paving. This may also include improved transit stops and multi-use signage and/or lanes where appropriate.
- **Access Management.** The goal of access management is to encourage orderly and well planned points of vehicular access to businesses. Clearly defining entrances and reducing the amount of paving creates a safer pedestrian environment and frees up space for sidewalks, landscaping, street trees, and amenities.

*Proposed Albany Avenue Improvements (note: alternative at grade curb bump-outs should be explored in order to minimize potential impacts to snow removal)*



- **Traffic Calming.** Reduced vehicle speeds help to lessen the number of traffic and pedestrian related accidents. Reduced speeds are also more conducive to creating a walkable environment and offer more opportunities for motorists to notice downtown stores, restaurants, and amenities. Traffic calming features such as curb bump-outs (at grade), signage (e.g., the new four-way intersection along Tibbits Avenue), roundabouts (e.g., along Albany Avenue), and well defined crosswalks have all been incorporated throughout the proposed streetscape improvements. In turn, these features will help encourage motorists to travel at posted speed limits and yield right-of-way to pedestrians.

- **Streetscape Beautification.** Streetscape beautification includes elements that promote a sense of place and add to its overall aesthetic quality. These elements also help create a pedestrian and people oriented experience. As illustrated in the streetscape concept plans (included at the end of this section), these elements may include underground utilities, street trees (appropriately spaced in order mitigate any potential parking related issues), pedestrian and traffic scale lighting, benches grouped around trees and gardens, flags, attractive wayfinding signage, and screening of parking areas or unsightly land uses.
- **Sustainable & Green Streets.** Stormwater runoff can contribute to degraded water quality. The use of alternative stormwater management techniques, such as bio-retention areas, disconnected curbs, and wet and dry swales, promotes the direct infiltration of rain and stormwater and help to mitigate Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) related issues. Possible locations for such improvements include parking facilities, landscaping improvements, and improved street tree wells. In addition, street trees act as carbon sinks and help to preserve road surfaces by shading them from the summer sun.



Figures depicting streetscape improvements are located at the end of this section. It is estimated that the total cost of these improvements is approximately \$10.3 million (this figure includes select Paine Street Park streetscape improvements). Because of the cost and level of commitment that is associated with these improvements, it is recommended that Green Island prepare a clear sidewalk repair and maintenance policy and enforcement procedures for residents and property owners. Please note that cost estimates for priority community improvements are included as Attachment A.

## 2. Improve Open Space & Recreational Resources

Green Island recreational and open space resources are vital to its community identity and high quality of life. Paine Street Park, River Park, Veterans Memorial Stadium, the Collar City Bridge recreational facilities, and Heatly School are essential to promoting a sense of place and health and well-being. Given the importance of these resources, it is recommended that Green Island consider the following initiatives:

- **Revitalization of Paine Street Park.** Suggested improvements to the Paine Street Park include recreation equipment upgrades, uniform signage, attractive lighting, landscaping, and preservation of large trees. Because of its importance to the community the streetscape improvements figures located at the end of this section identify additional improvements, including sidewalk upgrades, access improvements, and landscape treatment. Ultimately, it is envisioned that Paine Street Park could serve as Green Island’s “village green,” serving as a “downtown” focal point.
- **Revitalization of Veterans Memorial Stadium & Little League Park.** Improvements to Veterans Memorial Stadium may include the installation of more attractive fencing along Tibbits and Cohoes Avenues, upgraded recreational equipment, landscape improvements, uniform signage, and parking improvements.



- **Revitalization of Collar City Bridge Facilities.**

Located under the Collar City Bridge is a mix of open space and recreation resources, including park and public gathering spaces and basketball courts. Many Green Island officials and residents were opposed to the construction of the bridge, and efforts to make the most out of the unique space have had less than desirable results. As such, it is recommended that Green Island explore alternatives to improve the use and aesthetic quality of the location. Fortunately for Green Island, there are many examples of communities that have transformed similar spaces into creative place making projects. Creative uses in other communities include skateboard and bike parks, performance venues, fairs, art installations, water features, shopping, and passive recreation. Given the unique geometry of the Collar City Bridge's support system and the proximity to the Hudson River there are a variety of options that could make for a unique user experience. In addition, Green Island should also explore opportunities to create room for parking and improve existing recreational facilities.



- **Former Ford Site Reuse Plan.** Given its size and prominent location, the former Ford site presents tremendous open space and recreational opportunities. Effort should be made to identify existing environmental related conditions and/or restrictions. Based on this information a reuse plan for the site that includes the possible types and location of development and recreational uses should be prepared. This exercise should also take into consideration the proposed Mohawk Hudson Bike Hike Trail Black Iron Bridge connection.
- **Improve Waterfront Access & Multi-Use Trails Opportunities.** Having received an open space grant from the Hudson River Valley Greenway, Green Island may consider exploring several of these recommendations during the respective open space planning process. Additional planning initiatives may include the preparation of NYS Department of State (NYSDOS) Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP).

### 3. **Continue to Pursue Economic Development & Job Growth Initiatives**

Green Island should continue to attract business by continuing to cultivate strong relationships between Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), the Sage Colleges, Hudson Valley Community College, Siena College, University at Albany, and Union College to encourage business startups to locate in Green Island. In addition, Green Island may also encourage expanding businesses to apply for tax exemptions and credits through the New State Excelsior Jobs Program. Finally, it could help attract new small-scale businesses, including restaurants, grocery stores, services, etc., through the development of a NYS Homes & Community Renewal (NYSHCR) funded microenterprise program that provides grants to new or existing businesses with five (5) or fewer employees.

Although Green Island has been very successful in attracting new businesses, local employment opportunities are somewhat hampered by several “structural” employment related issues. More specifically, many Green Island businesses require technical training and/or advanced degrees in education. Because many Green Island residents’ background or educations do not align with these needs, employment opportunities are limited. In addition, the lack of retail or service job opportunities in Green Island further limits local employment. Although these issues are regional in scope, it is recommended that Green Island work with local employers, local and regional Chambers of Commerce, and the Center for Economic Growth (CEG) to identify ways to cultivate a local workforce. This may include job fairs, training programs, financial incentives, and Green Island Union Free School District curriculum development.

#### **4. Adopt a Coordinated Approach to Addressing Potential Brownfield Sites & Related Issues**

Green Island, like many communities, has several properties that have real or perceived environmental contamination issues as a result of their land use histories. This includes the former Ford site and several vacant properties located along James and Cannon Streets. While the former Ford site is in the process of undergoing environmental remediation, other sites throughout the community remain underutilized because of the potential remediation costs and/or liability concerns. Due to the reluctance of the free market to take on such projects, it is recommended that Green Island work with property owners and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and Department of State (NYSDOS) to address these issues. This may include the preparation of a NYSDOS Brownfield Opportunity Plan (BOA) or participation in the Brownfield or Voluntary Cleanup programs.

**5. Address Scrap Metal Recycling Yard Quality of Life Concerns**

During the Green Island Community Development Plan public workshops, many participants voiced their concerns about the scrap metal recycling yard located along Tibbits Avenue and Cannon Street. This included inadequate screening of stockpiles , operational noise, dust, heavy truck traffic, and environmental concerns. Participants also noted that the proximity to Tibbits Avenue and Paine Street Park were also a concern. As such, it is recommended that Green Island work with the property owners to address these concerns and possibly consider alternative highest and best uses for the site that would be more beneficial to both parties.



## Complementary Initiatives

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In addition to the Priority Projects, the following complementary initiatives are intended to address specific issues identified in the planning process as well as implement the vision discussed in the plan. Complementary projects are intended to work in concert with the Plan's higher Priority Projects. In addition to these complementary initiatives, proposed housing and community improvement recommendations that were not identified as a priority are included in Attachment B for future reference and consideration.

### 1. **Develop a Comprehensive Marketing and Branding Strategy**

In order to generate greater awareness about Green Island investment opportunities and to attract new residents and visitors, it is recommended that Green Island prepare a comprehensive branding and marketing strategy. Branding and marketing strategies includes identifying a positioning statement and collateral material to help define a location to an outside audience. A distinct and memorable identity will help Green Island stand out as a place to live, work, invest, and visit.

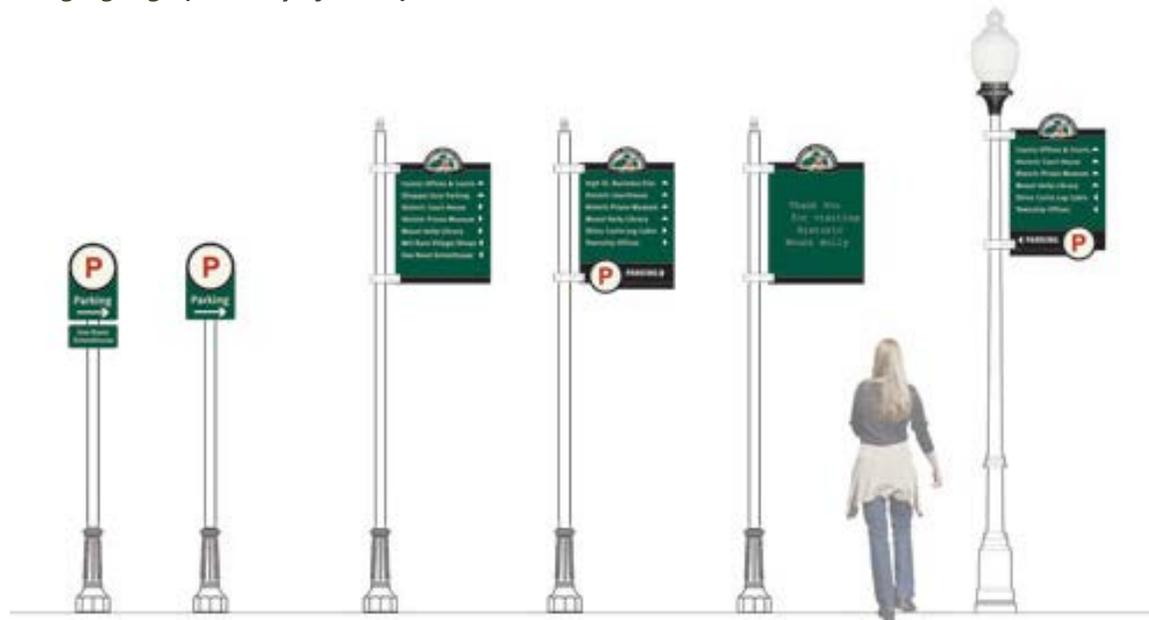
A successful initiative should capture Green Island's unique aspects and determine a strategy to deliver that message to the right audience. As a place of interest, Green Island competes with other Albany County, Capital Region, and Hudson Valley communities. The branding and marketing strategy should include the following:

- A compelling location identity and memorable tagline;
- A creative logo or signal art designed for repeat impressions on travelers when used on the web or in print media; and,

- Revisions to the Green Island website that helps to facilitate information sharing and interoperability (e.g., data sharing, collaborative mapping, smartphone application integration, etc.). This may include improved graphics and an interactive, information portal to area businesses, institutions, attractions, and events. Finally, the website could incorporate improved social media interaction, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube.

Once complete, branding elements could be incorporated as part of the recommend streetscape improvements, including street banners and informational and wayfinding signage (see sample below). In addition, the comprehensive branding and marketing strategy could include an implementation component that identifies suggested deliverables, recommended media outlets and preferred vendors, printers and fabricators.

*Sample wayfinding signage (courtesy of VS&R)*



Given the complexity of this initiative, it is recommended that that Green Island partner with a professional communications and marketing firm, the Albany Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the proposed Green Island Business Association to explore and identify specific market and branding strategies. Funding for such an initiative may be obtained through the NYS Regional Tourism Marketing Grant Initiative (I Love New York Fund) Consolidated Funding Application (CFA).

## **2. Develop and Promote Social and Cultural Events**

The number of social and cultural event opportunities within Green Island is limitless. Many residents and visitors already enjoy existing events like the Green Island Gazebo (GIG) Summer Series at the gazebo in River Park. Green Island should work with residents, business owners, and organizations to develop and promote a wide variety of social, community, and cultural events. These events could focus on Green Island's rich industrial history or waterfront resources. For example, Green Island could host additional River Park events that seek to attract a more regional audience, or hold a canoe and kayak race along the Hudson River. Green Island could also collaborate with neighboring communities on regional events. This may include road races (including the well-attended Running of the Green 4-mile race), bicycle races, and triathlons. Such events would attract visitors and could be cross-marketed with local businesses via the proposed Green Island Business Association.

## Funding Strategy & Cost Estimates

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The implementation of the Green Island Community Development Plan will depend largely upon the availability of funding. However, no one source will likely fund the entire plan. Therefore, it is important to explore and leverage all funding opportunities. Given the variety of funding sources and strategies, it is important to continually examine priorities, possible alternatives, and implementation strategies. Therefore, while it is recommended that Green Island focus on priority projects, each of the initiatives identified in this plan should be revisited as opportunities present themselves.

### Housing Initiatives

#### *Existing Funding Resources*

Green Island residents are within the service area of the Albany County Rural Housing Alliance, and can take advantage of the recently awarded Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC) grants for both housing rehabilitation and home purchase. However, these funds are available to all households within the County, and therefore Green Island residents are competing for a limited pool of resources. Anecdotally, there has been some difficulty in getting participation in these programs.

#### *Rehabilitation & Conversion*

A vast majority of housing in Green Island was constructed in 1939 or earlier. Therefore opportunities to renovate its current housing stock are important given that there are few opportunities for new construction. It should be noted that the rehabilitation or conversion of existing structures, if built prior to 1978, will almost always require interim controls for lead based paint, which is determined to be a public health hazard for children and families.

All residential painting projects (even if privately funded) must now be conducted by an EPA-certified contractor who is mandated to follow safe work practices. Utilizing public sources for rehabilitation can help defray the increased time and cost to complete projects involving lead based paint hazards. There are several different programs that can be utilized to create or renovate rental units in existing structures so that structures are in rentable or sale condition:

- **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)** - Given the large percentage homeowners with rental units (based on owner occupancy and parcel data approximately 78 percent of dwellings units have an owner residing in them), Green Island should consider competing for funds to administer a rental rehabilitation program through NYS Homes & Community Renewal (NYSHCR). This could be offered in conjunction with a rental registration program to investment property owners who are mandated to make certain improvements prior to renting a vacant unit to new tenants. Funding is made available through NYSHCR on an annual basis. This assistance requires limiting tenant incomes and rents for a specified affordability term. In addition, as a community with high rates of low to moderate income, more substantial renovation projects, such as those that involve the conversion of commercial space to residential, between two (2) and nine (9) units for example, can also be financed through CDBG.
- **New York HOME Program** – Similar to the NYSHCR’s CDBG funding, the NYS HOME program provides funds to acquire, rehabilitate, or construct housing, or to provide assistance to low-income home-buyers and renters. HOME Program funds may be used to pay for acquisition, rehabilitation, construction, and certain



related soft costs. HOME Program funds may only be used to assist households with incomes at or below 80 percent of area median income. Rental projects must primarily serve households with incomes at or below 60 percent of area median income. Assisted rental units must remain affordable for a period of between five (5) and 20 years, depending on the initial amount of subsidy provided for the project.

- **New York Main Street** –The NYSHCR’s New York Main Street (NYMS) program offers grants to units of government and nonprofits to partner with building owners to provide assistance for commercial and residential improvements to buildings in downtown areas of the community. Grant limits are \$50,000 for façade and commercial projects, with another \$10,000 for each residential unit proposed, not to exceed \$100,000 per building. Assistance is provided on a 75/25 percent matching basis (25 percent by the owner). Funding applications are required to develop a comprehensive approach to both residential and commercial needs within the identified target area, particularly if there is a need for affordable rental units in decent condition. Based on our experience, this program has been used in many communities to renovate or create residential units in former commercial space in downtown areas, meeting the goals of the funding agency and increasing the local supply of decent, affordable housing units. This program is very competitive and somewhat limited in funds available.
- **Access to Home** – Access to Home, administered through NYSHCR provides funds to municipalities and nonprofits to assist with handicapped accessibility improvements for low to moderate income individuals. This program may be useful in addressing increasingly untenable situations where Village seniors want to “age in place” but have neither the resources nor the ability to undertake these improvements themselves. As identified in the Community Development Plan, the physical structure of the existing housing stock will require creative solutions to accessibility barriers. It must be noted, however, that this program has very limited funding, and may be better carried out through a partnership with a regional non-profit that works with these populations.

## New Construction



The Green Island Community Development Plan identifies a number of locations in Green Island that would be appropriate for new residential and/or mixed used development (e.g., former Ford site parking area and Cannon Street). New construction projects are nearly always completed by the private development community, but can be facilitated by the municipality. Funds are available through a variety of sources including HOME, Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC), and the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

New construction, if financed by a private entity, will likely focus on creating market-rate units (approximately \$110,000-\$120,000 for Green Island). The municipality can indirectly “subsidize” these activities through taking control of the site (e.g., ownership, site clearance, etc.), providing the necessary infrastructure (e.g., utilities), and providing the land at low cost to a competent developer through a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process. The resulting units may provide home ownership opportunities and can be targeted to a mix of incomes.

Conversely, as a condition of assistance, nearly all public grant sources of subsidy require a term of affordability and rent/income restriction with the goal of creating affordable housing units. Most programs require a five-year regulatory period, after which the assistance is forgiven. Housing that is assisted or built using public funds is nearly always geared toward providing affordable housing opportunities. However, at the close of the regulatory period, those units will enter the market unencumbered, providing market-rate housing for the community.

The following sources should be pursued by Green Island to promote new market-rate and/or affordable single- and multifamily owner occupied and renter occupied housing:

- **NYS Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC)** – AHC funds are made available annually for acquisition and rehabilitation of owner occupied units (includes one-four family homes, condos and cooperatives). These funds require a 40 percent match of the total development costs, and will provide a subsidy of up to \$40,000 per unit. The assisted home must be owner occupied by households that are between 100 percent and 166 percent of the HUD low income limits. AHC funds could also be used by Green Island to facilitate the purchase and construction of homes on cleared lots on one of several sites identified for new development. Grants would be made to income eligible households who have obtained conventional bank financing. In this situation, the bank loan and personal equity would more than cover the required match.
- **HOME & CDBG** – Both HOME and CDBG should continue to be used to subsidize the purchase of newly constructed homes by providing grants to income eligible homebuyers. Please note that in this context, these funds would not be used for the actual construction of the units. Rather, funds could be used to write down the closing costs and close the gap between the permanent bank loan and the borrower’s resources. These funds would come to the municipality and then be made available to individual households.

Other funding sources for owner occupied housing targeted to families and developers include the following:

- **State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA)** – SONYMA offers incentives to both families and builders to provide or purchase affordable housing. The Construction Incentive Program offers income eligible households 97 percent financing (through a participating lender) on new construction, restricted to SONYMA’s purchase price limits. Project Set-Aside is an incentive for developers to build affordable housing units. The builder is then able to market the whole development as eligible for SONYMA financing,

and may enable them to finance additional units. This program may also be used in conjunction with the conversion or renovation of existing structures to mid- and high-rise condominiums and cooperatives.

### *Homeownership Assistance*

In addition to new construction, funds are available from NYSHCR for single-family home purchase assistance. However, an application will be competitive only if it can be demonstrated that there is sufficient available housing stock in an affordable price range. Because there are limited options available for single-family home ownership within Green Island, this funding option is somewhat limited. As previously noted, there are a variety of ways to encourage the sale of owner occupied, multi-family housing units using some of the programs listed under the “Infill, New Construction, and Conversions” section above. In addition, the possibility of converting existing structures (creating condo units in vacant commercial or industrial space using AHC, for example) should not be dismissed.

Because of these funding limitations, Green Island should survey and identify specific situations where current tenants are seeking to purchase the home where they live. Identification of these specific needs would build a better case for homeownership assistance applications. One approach to identifying these opportunities would be to conduct a comprehensive investment property owner survey to determine housing condition, on-going issues, and whether they are looking to dispose of the property. However, because of access related issues, this approach would largely rely upon the creation of a rental registration program, at which point investment property owners could be surveyed during the registration process.

Finally, because of the interrelationship between home ownership and employment opportunities, one way to link jobs and residents is to request funds to implement a microenterprise program in Green Island. Providing grants to new or existing businesses with five or fewer employees would encourage the growth of home-spun,

small businesses within the community. This would, in turn, allow the capture of more dollars locally, while simultaneously strengthening the identity of the community and encouraging homeownership. Recipients of microenterprise grants must either be considered low to moderate income individuals, or create a full time equivalent position available to or held by a low to moderate income individual.

### *Multifamily & Rental Housing Assistance*

A local unit of government often may have few resources to leverage or incentivize new multifamily development other than clear and equitable planning and permitting reviews, and providing low cost land. However, as with single family construction, conducting predevelopment activities, such as site clearance and providing utilities, water, sewer, low cost land, or other infrastructure, are useful in attracting private developers to the community.

Large, multifamily rental projects often use complex funding mechanisms that are based around tax-credit syndication programs. One of the more common programs is the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program or LIHTC. Projects financed through LIHTC are facilitated by the entity constructing and/or managing the project. A separate Limited Liability Corporation (LLC) or other entity is created to manage the project after completion. These programs are generally used in cases where there is a clearly identified need for additional affordable rental housing, such as senior apartments.

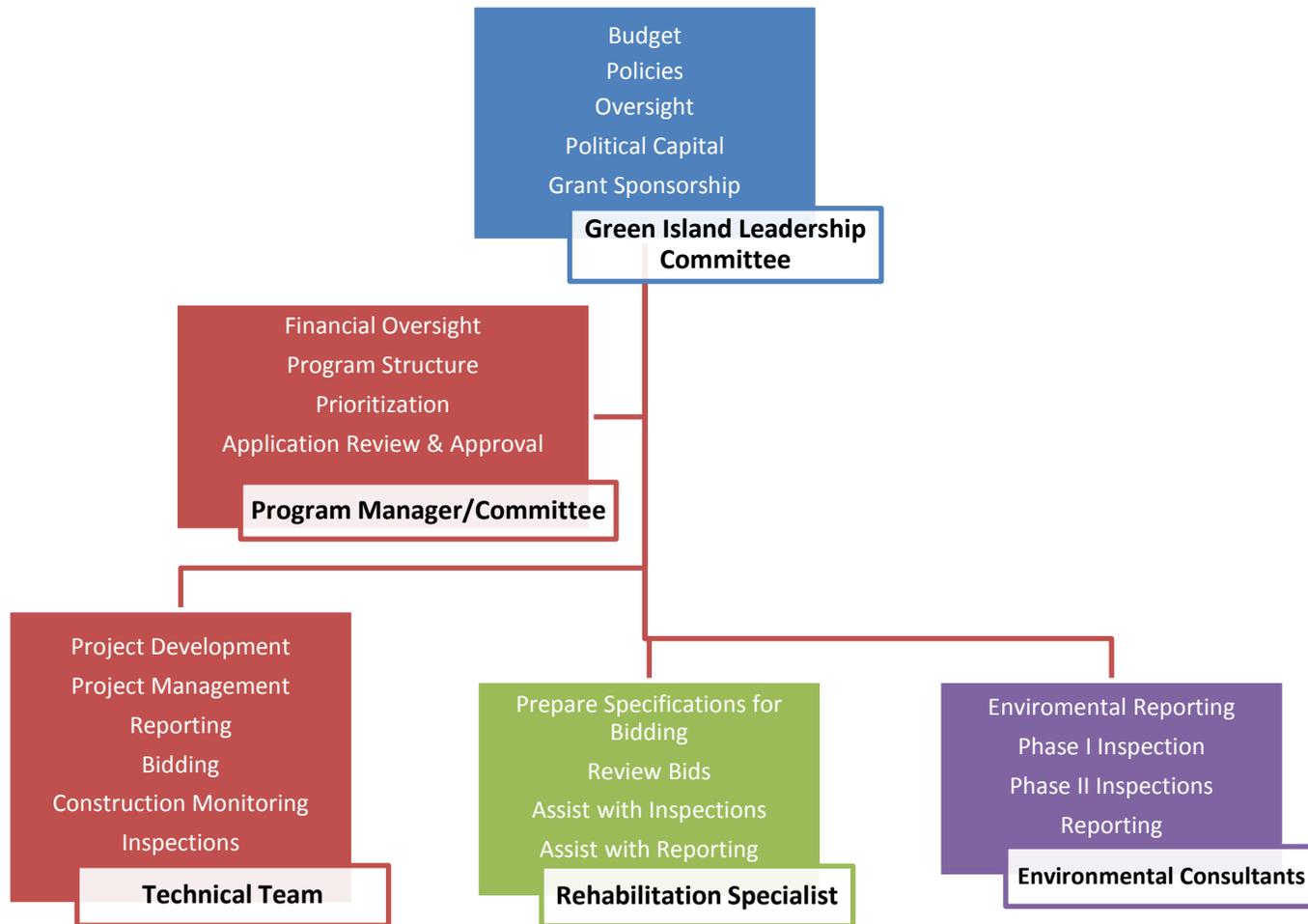
Given the number of vacant rental units in the community, this strategy does not appear appropriate for Green Island. Rather, a focus should be given to rehabilitating the existing rental housing stock as identified by the proposed Green Island Housing Program (see below).

### *Green Island Housing Program*

In order to obtain and/or coordinate the abovementioned funding sources and initiatives, Green Island should consider creating a local housing program. Housing programs work best through a team approach that may involve local planners and/or elected officials, the local building department and/or codes enforcement officer, consultants, and the program representative from the respective funding agencies. Each program is tailored to the specific activity (e.g. rehabilitation, homeownership, etc.) and to the needs of the community. There is an enormous spectrum of possible roles and responsibilities for each member of the program team, contingent on the degree of oversight (or autonomy) the community leaders wish to provide. As previously noted, a typical housing rehabilitation program, might involve the following components (see organizational structure next page):

- **Local Program Manager or Committee** – An individual or committee that is solely dedicated to providing financial oversight of the program, performs application intake and solicitation, keeps technical team on task, and assures compliance with grant requirements.
- **Technical Team** – Often a consultant, they will provide day-to-day management of the program including contractor and homeowner mediation, program reporting, preparation of disbursement materials, inspections, construction monitoring, and project bidding.
- **Rehabilitation Specialist** – Will work with technical team, consultant or community, and the local building and codes department to develop specifications for project development and bidding and assist with inspections.
- **Environmental Consultants** – Third party contractors hired to survey environmental hazards such as lead, mold, radon, or asbestos.

Please note that for new construction or for programs not specifically geared toward housing (e.g., New York Main Street programs) the housing program team could look very different. Other determining factors include funding agency requirements, local conditions, and the nature of the activity.



## Community Improvement Cost Estimates

The overall 2012 cost estimate for the Green Island Community Development Plan’s priority community improvements are approximately \$11.3 million. This includes select streetscape and recreational resource improvements along Albany Avenue, Cohoes Avenue, George Street, Hudson and Lower Hudson Avenues, Paine Street Park, and Tibbits Avenue. Proposed improvements include roadway reconstruction, new sidewalks, crosswalks, period lighting, street trees and landscaping, and signage. A copy of these cost estimates is included as an Attachment A.

Costs are summarized as follows:

<b>Improvement Location</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Albany Avenue	\$854,800
Cohoes Avenue	\$194,340
George Street	\$1,787,300
Hudson & Lower Hudson Avenue	\$2,251,000*
Paine Street Park	\$781,000
Tibbits Avenue	\$789,800
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$6,659,040**</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11,281,200***</b>

\* Please note that Hudson Avenue improvements cost approximately \$1,665,000.

\*\* Please note that all cost estimates are conceptual in nature.

\*\*\*Total includes additional costs related signage, maintenance and protection of traffic, mobilization, contingencies (e.g., site specific utility issues, etc.), and legal, technical, and administrative allowance. Additional cost associated with desired lighting type and placement, landscaping, and wayfinding signage may result in increased costs.

The cost estimates are generally divided into roadways or site-specific improvements. However, Green Island could divide a project into phases as a means of further reducing the scale and cost in order to make a project more readily fundable. As an example: 1) roadway surface improvements; 2) sidewalks, pedestrian connections, and landscaping; 3) lighting and utilities; and/or, 4) select road segments.

- **Roadway surface improvements** could include resurfacing and/or reconfiguration of select roadways (e.g., roundabouts, installation of turning lanes or medians, etc.).
- **Sidewalks, pedestrian connections, and landscaping** could be implemented as part of an overall transportation enhancement or corridor beautification initiative or divided into several site-specific improvement projects. In addition, the Village should evaluate a residential sidewalk improvement program. This may include a reimbursement program that utilizes CBDG Section 108 monies.
- **Lighting and utility improvements** could include the installation of utilities in preparation for new lighting or signals, modifications to existing stormwater facilities, and perhaps undergrounding overhead facilities (not included in cost estimates). Utility work could be completed as a component of a municipal project or funded as a component of an environmental improvement project.
- **Select Road Segments** could include the reconstruction of a smaller portion of a roadway (e.g., reconstruction of George Street between Arch Street and Tibbits Avenue).

While there are many benefits to implementing the proposed improvements in phases, it is important to note that there is a slight increase in costs, which is attributable to redundant mobilization and/or restoration activities.

### *Potential Community Improvement Funding Sources*

The Village should investigate the feasibility of funding sources to assist in the implementation of the improvements outlined in the study. These could include:

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** program is a federally funded program that is administered locally by New York State’s Office of Community Renewal. The CDBG Program provides grants to smaller communities for a variety of project types including public infrastructure. Under the CDBG Program, approximately \$40 million of funding is available annually to eligible communities within New York State. The grant maximum for CDBG economic development activities is \$750,000. (<http://www.nyshcr.org/Programs/NYS-CDBG/>)
- As a Hudson River community, New York State Department of State (NYSDOS) **Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP)** funds are available through the State’s Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process. Monies for the program are derived from the State’s Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) and may be used to prepare a wide variety of waterfront and community planning initiatives and projects. Grant requirements include a 50 percent local match. ([http://www.dos.ny.gov/communitieswaterfronts/grantOpportunities/epf\\_lwrrpGrants.html](http://www.dos.ny.gov/communitieswaterfronts/grantOpportunities/epf_lwrrpGrants.html))
- Also available through the State’s CFA process are New York State **Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Parks (OPRHP)** funds. Similar to the LWRP funds, the monies for these programs are derived from the State’s EPF funds and require a 50 percent local match. (<http://nysparks.com/grants/>)
- The NYSDOS **Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA)** provides financial and technical assistance to municipalities and community-based organizations. Funding can be used to complete revitalization

plans and implementation strategies for areas affected by the presence of brownfield sites, as well as site assessments for strategic sites. BOA funded projects may be reimbursed for up to 90 percent of the total eligible project costs. (<http://www.dos.ny.gov/communitieswaterfronts/grantOpportunities/boagrants.html>)

- As a Hudson River community, Green Island is eligible to apply of **Hudson River Valley Greenway** grant programs. These programs fund a wide variety of planning initiatives and projects and require a range of local matches. (<http://www.hudsongreenway.ny.gov/GrantFunding/GrantsOverview.aspx>)
- **Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP)** funds require a minimum total project cost of \$200,000 and maximum federal participation of \$2.5 million. However, pending Congressional action to extend or replace the **Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)**, this program has limited funds. (<https://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/tep>)
- For long-term funding apply for locally administered federal aid highway funds through the **Capital District Transportation Committee's (CDTC) Transportation Improvement Project (TIP)** process. This is a competitive selection process and is dependent on fund levels and categories authorized and appropriated by the US Congress. (<http://www.cdtcmpo.org/>)
- **The NYS Environmental Facility Corporation (EFC) Green Innovation Grant Program** is a highly competitive grant program that uses funding from the US Environmental Protect Agency and is administered under the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. The Green Innovation Grant Program 2010 (GIGP 2010) will provide seed money for projects which spur green innovation, build green capacity, and facilitate technology transfer throughout the State. Eligible projects will improve water quality and demonstrate sustainable wastewater infrastructure in communities across the State. The design grant

maximum is \$50,000 per project, and a grant match of 50 percent is required. The construction grant maximum is \$750,000 per project, and a grant match of 10 percent is required.

(<http://www.nysefc.org/home/index.asp?page=1046>)

- **The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Urban and Community Forestry Grants Funding** seeks to encourage and assist municipalities as they develop and implement sustainable local urban forestry programs. Grants are designed to encourage communities to actively enhance tree cover along their streets and in their parks, to properly care for and maintain their community trees, to develop tree inventories and management plans, and to inform their residents of the value and benefits of urban trees.

**ATTACHMENTS A:**  
**PRIORITY COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COST ESTIMATES**

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**Opinion of Probable Cost for Village of Green Island - Green Island Community Action Plan**  
**Chazen Project No. 91202.00**

**Date: August 2012**

Description	QTY	Unit	Unit Price	Total Cost
<b>ALBANY AVENUE</b>				
Full Depth Pavement Removal	1,800	CY	\$15.00	\$27,000.00
Asphalt Pavement (1.5" Top & 2.5" Binder)	850	TON	\$80.00	\$68,000.00
Subbase Type 2 (12")	1,300	CY	\$42.00	\$54,600.00
Pavement Striping	2,200	LF	\$1.00	\$2,200.00
Granite Curbing	1,900	LF	\$40.00	\$76,000.00
Concrete Sidewalk (4" Thick)	9,600	SF	\$6.00	\$57,600.00
Large Street Trees (Inc. planting material)	60	EA	\$600.00	\$36,000.00
Brick Pavers	3,900	SF	\$16.00	\$62,400.00
Historic Pedestrian Lighting	30	EA	\$7,000.00	\$210,000.00
Burying Overhead Utilities	1,850	LF	\$60.00	\$111,000.00
Roundabout (Inc. all pavement, curb, pavers, striping landscaping)	1	LS	\$150,000.00	\$150,000.00
<b>Total Albany Avenue</b>				<b>\$854,800.00</b>
<b>COHOES AVENUE</b>				
Granite Curbing	900	LF	\$40.00	\$36,000.00
Concrete Sidewalk (4" Thick)	4,200	SF	\$6.00	\$25,200.00
Large Street Trees (Inc. planting material)	24	EA	\$600.00	\$14,400.00
Grass Strip (Inc. 6" Topsoil)	4,200	SF	\$0.20	\$840.00
Historic Pedestrian Lighting	12	EA	\$7,000.00	\$84,000.00
Ornamental Fence	565	LF	\$60.00	\$33,900.00
<b>Total Cohoes Avenue</b>				<b>\$194,340.00</b>
<b>GEORGE STREET</b>				
Full Depth Pavement Removal	7,000	CY	\$15.00	\$105,000.00
Asphalt Pavement (1.5" Top & 2.5" Binder)	3,400	TON	\$80.00	\$272,000.00
Subbase Type 2 (12")	5,300	CY	\$42.00	\$222,600.00
Pavement Striping	7,700	LF	\$1.00	\$7,700.00
Granite Curbing	7,700	LF	\$40.00	\$308,000.00
Concrete Sidewalk (4" Thick)	7,700	SF	\$6.00	\$46,200.00
Large Street Trees (Inc. planting material)	220	EA	\$600.00	\$132,000.00
Brick Pavers	19,300	SF	\$16.00	\$308,800.00
Historic Pedestrian Lighting	55	EA	\$7,000.00	\$385,000.00
<b>Total George Street</b>				<b>\$1,787,300.00</b>
<b>HUDSON AVENUE &amp; LOWER HUDSON AVENUE</b>				
Full Depth Pavement Removal	7,400	CY	\$15.00	\$111,000.00
Asphalt Pavement (1.5" Top & 2.5" Binder)	3,650	TON	\$80.00	\$292,000.00
Subbase Type 2 (12")	5,550	CY	\$42.00	\$233,100.00
Pavement Striping	14,000	LF	\$1.00	\$14,000.00
Granite Curbing	8,700	LF	\$40.00	\$348,000.00
Concrete Sidewalk (4" Thick)	43,500	SF	\$6.00	\$261,000.00
Large Street Trees (Inc. planting material)	240	EA	\$600.00	\$144,000.00
Grass Strip (Inc. 6" Topsoil)	43,500	SF	\$0.20	\$8,700.00
Historic Pedestrian Lighting	120	EA	\$7,000.00	\$840,000.00
<b>Total Hudson Avenue &amp; Lower Hudson Avenue</b>				<b>\$2,251,800.00</b>
<b>PAINE STREET PARK IMPROVEMENTS (INC. CANNON ST &amp; BLEECKER ST)</b>				
Full Depth Pavement Removal	1,500	CY	\$15.00	\$22,500.00
Asphalt Pavement (1.5" Top & 2.5" Binder)	1,200	TON	\$80.00	\$96,000.00
Subbase Type 2 (12")	1,700	CY	\$42.00	\$71,400.00
Pavement Striping	2,700	LF	\$1.00	\$2,700.00
Granite Curbing	2,700	LF	\$40.00	\$108,000.00
Concrete Sidewalk (4" Thick)	11,000	SF	\$6.00	\$66,000.00
Large Street Trees (Inc. planting material)	70	EA	\$600.00	\$42,000.00
Small Street Trees (Inc. planting material)	15	EA	\$500.00	\$7,500.00
Brick Pavers	4,000	SF	\$16.00	\$64,000.00
Grass Strip (Inc. 6" Topsoil)	4,500	SF	\$0.20	\$900.00
Historic Pedestrian Lighting	30	EA	\$7,000.00	\$210,000.00
Ornamental Fence	1,500	LF	\$60.00	\$90,000.00
<b>Total Paine Street Park</b>				<b>\$781,000.00</b>
<b>TIBBITS AVENUE</b>				
Full Depth Pavement Removal	2,900	CY	\$15.00	\$43,500.00
Asphalt Pavement (1.5" Top & 2.5" Binder)	1,500	TON	\$80.00	\$120,000.00
Subbase Type 2 (12")	2,200	CY	\$42.00	\$92,400.00
Pavement Striping	3,300	LF	\$1.00	\$3,300.00
Granite Curbing	2,600	LF	\$40.00	\$104,000.00
Concrete Sidewalk (4" Thick)	13,000	SF	\$6.00	\$78,000.00
Large Street Trees (Inc. planting material)	80	EA	\$600.00	\$48,000.00
Brick Pavers	3,800	SF	\$16.00	\$60,800.00
Grass Strip (Inc. 6" Topsoil)	9,000	SF	\$0.20	\$1,800.00
Historic Pedestrian Lighting	34	EA	\$7,000.00	\$238,000.00
<b>Total Tibbits Avenue</b>				<b>\$789,800.00</b>
<b>Construction Estimate Subtotal</b>				<b>\$6,659,040.00</b>
<b>Signage Contingency</b>				<b>\$28,000.00</b>
<b>Maintenance &amp; Protection of Traffic (4%)</b>				<b>\$266,361.60</b>
<b>Mobilization (4%)</b>				<b>\$278,136.60</b>
<b>Project Contingency (30%)</b>				<b>\$2,169,461.30</b>
<b>Construction Total</b>				<b>\$9,400,998.96</b>
<b>Legal, Technical, and Administrative Allowance (20%)</b>				<b>\$1,880,199.79</b>
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$11,281,199.00</b>

<sup>1</sup> This Opinion of Probable Cost is intended to be used for order of magnitude pricing for budget purposes. Estimate is based on approximate dimensions measured from aerial imagery. A more detailed estimate can be prepared following land survey services and advancement of design.

<sup>2</sup> Estimate does not include burial of existing overhead wires, with the exception of Albany Avenue. Burying of overhead utilities is highly dependent upon type and condition of existing utilities in the area. For the purpose of this opinion of probable costs, burial of existing overhead wiring for Albany Avenue has been estimated to cost approximately \$60 per linear foot. This cost will need to be verified following complete identification of existing utilities as design progresses.

<sup>3</sup> Signage contingency assumes approximately 26 intersections (w/ 4 signs minimum per intersection), plus additional wayfinding signage.

<sup>4</sup> Utilities (Water, Sanitary Sewer, Storm Sewer, Gas, etc.) have not been estimated as part of this Opinion of Probable Costs. If the Village determines that they would like to advance underground utility replacement/improvements, those items would need to be added to this estimate.



**ATTACHMENTS B:**

**ADDITIONAL HOUSING & COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

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The following housing and community improvement initiatives were not identified as a priority during the **Green Island Community Development Plan** planning process. However, they have been included as an attachment for future reference and consideration.

### **Housing Considerations**

1. Develop a web-based, interactive housing database that can be used by Village officials to map, categorize, and identify ownership, senior housing, special needs housing, and rental trends. The database may include sales and rental information, code violations, and grant program information.
2. Forge relationships with select real-estate agents to become quickly aware of new or prospective listings in order to better promote new homeownership opportunities. Partnership opportunities may include the non-profit Community Realty.
3. Consider developing moderately priced housing for seniors, as opposed to apartments that cater only to low-income or higher income residents.
4. Consider alerting school social workers to the issue of homelessness to track children who may be at risk and establish a referral system.
5. Review zoning and site plan requirements to ensure that accommodate special/senior housing needs and improvements.
6. Consider reexamining the option of increasing Section 8 vouchers to include Homeownership Voucher Program. The program allows a first-time home buyer to use vouchers to pay the mortgage.
7. Consider increasing the number of Village Section 8 vouchers, which enable the federal government to pay the difference between what the tenant can afford to pay and the rent actually charged. Please note that 40 percent of the current 41 vouchers are held by seniors.

### **Community Improvement Considerations**

1. Publicize and promote Green Island's new assessment exemptions that are applicable to new construction.

2. Explore ways to better collaborate with the school regarding year-round youth programs. This may include programming school facilities during summertime to meet community needs.
3. Examine ways to improve connectivity between Center Island and the Village.
4. Create a nature preserve along 787 near Lafayette Park/Development (entrance could be located at the end of Hamilton Street)
5. Consider creating a nature preserve at the former Ford site in order to promote its natural resources.
6. Develop programs and/or amenities for young families. This may include improved parks, youth programs and a youth and/or community center.
7. Facilitate the construction of attractive sound barriers along portions of 787 to reduce traffic related noises in nearby neighborhoods.
8. Sponsor small business development forums and classes (e.g., Community Loan Fund of Capital Region with the College of Saint Rose offers an eight-week small business training course).

**ATTACHMENTS C:**  
**PUBLIC WORKSHOP SUMMARY**

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## Meeting Summary

**Village of Green Island  
Community Development Plan  
March 13, 2012 7:00pm**

Chazen and TAP provided a presentation on some initial demographic, employment, and housing analysis. The overall Green Island Community Development Plan process was also presented. Following the presentation, participants were divided into four groups and took part in facilitated discussions about housing and community improvement needs. The following topics were discussed during the public workshop:

Housing:

1. Some were surprised at the number of owner occupied properties and felt that the U.S. Census figures were too high.
2. It was noted several individuals own a significant number of investment properties.
3. It was noted that there are some individuals that own a lot property within the Village.
4. Selling homes and renting places is not a problem because of word of mouth, no need for signs.
5. There is a need for Assistance with home repair, particularly for seniors.
6. Green Island had two (2) senior housing facilities. One is public and the other is private. Some said that there is a long waiting list and that there is a need for more senior housing. Others noted that there was not a long waiting list that there was adequate senior housing given the lack of demand.
7. Many shared this sentiment that seniors would like to age in place even if they are unable to maintain their homes.
8. There is a need for improved home access for the disabled.
9. The Ford site offers housing, open space, and economic development opportunities.
10. It was suggested that absentee landlords are a problem.
11. Some tenants think that rents are too high and landlords think that rents are too low.

12. It was stated that because individuals fail to pay rent landlords cannot afford to fix or maintain their property.
13. It was suggested that the transient nature of renters impacts housing quality and the level of commitment to the community.
14. It was noted that many renters are young and that lower rents are attractive.
15. It was mentioned that renters may have larger family sizes than indicated by the U.S. Census figures.
16. Some rental providers do not adequately screen potential renters.
17. The need for a rental certificate of occupancy (CO) program was noted. For example, owners would need to obtain a CO between renters to ensure safety and maintenance, which includes interior and exterior inspections.
18. It was noted that people cannot afford a building inspection or do not want to pay for one even if it is relatively inexpensive.
19. Some felt that enforcement was an issue, including the following:
  - a. Shoveling of snow
  - b. Cutting of grass
  - c. Taking out trash on time
  - d. Cleaning property
  - e. Enforcing parking laws
20. It was suggested that as property character or conditions deteriorate, so does the tenant quality. This has impacts on the school and neighbor relations.
21. Some felt that by introducing poorer quality tenants to the community impacted the school system and placed burdens on neighborhoods.
22. The following statements regarding Section 8 housing were offered by several individuals:
  - a. Some stated that people who are in Section 8 do not deserve it.
  - b. Some felt that Section 8 properties are not maintained, and that the requirements of the Section 8 program are not fulfilled.
  - c. Some felt Section 8 enforcement is limited, which results in poor housing conditions and property maintenance.
  - d. It was stated that Section 8 housing is only inspected once a year, and renewed at the end of the year.
  - e. It was stated that there exists limited public access to the river because Section 8 housing is situated along the river.

- f. Some felt that the Village should not accept anymore Section 8 vouchers, even if just 10 to 20 more.
  - g. There needs to be more Section 8 building inspection. This may include unannounced inspections (similar to Watervliet's program).
  - h. If there is an increase the number of Section 8 vouchers, landlords should be required to fix their properties up. Perhaps Section 8 opportunities could help fund such improvements.
23. It was suggested that the Village should seek programs that link affordable housing and home repair/maintenance.
24. Some felt that overall housing maintenance is an issue.
25. There have been some housing improvement programs but people do not take part.
26. It was noted that the Village needs a housing program coordinator to publicize grants for landowners, particularly the elderly. The program coordinator could inform individuals on how to fix things, and identify/assist with additional funding sources.
27. Some felt that people do not trust funding programs until a family member or friend has some experience. There is a need for program outreach and education.
28. The Village should seek programs that help people (financially) to stay in their house and/or repair/change their façades.
29. It was noted that FEMA flood insurance map inaccuracies have an impact on housing affordability/desirability because flood insurance is extremely expensive (sometimes more than the individual mortgage). Many people do not know about such cost until after they purchase a property.
30. The new floodplain line is not publicized yet.
31. It was suggested that FEMA flood insurance maps be better publicized to better inform existing and future residents.
32. In some instances, professional services may assist in modifying flood maps, thereby negating the need for flood insurance.
33. Some suggested that people within the flood zone should be relocated.
34. It was noted that not all heating systems are up-to-date.

35. In some instances it is necessary to modify a house so that it fits an occupant's needs to address accessibility. However, the addition of external ramps along narrow sidewalks can be a problem. Code and zoning related issues should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. It was suggested that Troy's public right-of-way modification provisions could serve as a good example.

36. It was suggested the house on Swan Street get new stones in order to solve the flooding problems that they are having.

#### Community Improvements:

1. Some of Green Island's greatest amenities included the following:
  - a. Veterans' Memorial Park
  - b. Paine Park
  - c. "Gazebo" Park
  - d. Heatly School
  - e. Natural setting west of Lafayette Park
  - f. The Cannon Street Walk
2. It was noted that there used to be successful family-owned businesses and this is no longer the case.
3. Some felt that it would be difficult for a business to thrive just on the village population alone.
4. There is no space for new business opportunities. Some felt that a local business movement or a central market will not work because of past previous experience. It was noted that Green Island did have a central market, but people did not support it.
5. There is a lot of vacant land available at the Cohoes entrance. It was suggested that it may be a good place for a grocery store.
6. Some felt that it would be nice to have a place to eat (e.g., breakfast and lunch, diner, restaurant, etc.).
7. The Hudson River waterfront is one of Green Island's greatest resources, but there exists a lack of physical and/or visual access. It was also noted that there is great fishing along Green Island's waterfront.
8. There is a need for more uses and access along waterfront, including housing (e.g., near the Black Bridge), marina, trails, etc.
9. It was noted that the bald eagles along the waterfront are a big attraction.
10. It was noted that the kids on the island need a central place to eat and recreate.

11. It was suggested that a youth center be developed to serve as a central place for the kids to interact.
12. It was suggested that a family-oriented nature preserve be developed near Hamilton Street and 787, with the entrance located at the end of Hamilton Street.
13. It was noted that old kiddie pool will be replaced with a new sprinkler park because of drainage problems.
14. There is a need for more amenities for young families (e.g., parks, activities, programs, youth center etc.).
15. I was recommended that Green Island work to enhance and increase the amount of green spaces.
16. Nonresidents increase demand of such Village resource as parks.
17. Some felt that there should not be a park under the Collar City Bridge because of dust and bird droppings.
18. Site contamination (or perception) is a problem, including the former Ford site, which could be redeveloped.
19. To utilize the empty parking lot at Ford, the village should consider adding a solar array that could generate energy for Green Island.
20. It was noted that the Carlow property is abandoned because of environmental issues. It was suggested that the site be redeveloped for housing and/or local businesses.
21. Vehicle noise from 787 is a nuisance along the west side of the Village. Sound barriers may help address this problem.
22. The visual, noise, and truck traffic impacts of the junkyard on Tibbits Avenue needs to be addressed. It was noted that it has unattractive fencing, that the trees were dying, and the dirt from the site was bothersome.
23. It was suggested that the intersection of Tibbits and Cannon be converted to a four-way intersection in order to mitigate truck traffic and vehicle speed impacts.
24. It was suggested that access along the riverfront could be obtained via Center Street and Park, which follows and public right-of-way.

25. It was asked if the Ford site could become a restaurant. It was noted that there had been past experiences of trying to sell the land, but that the economy has been an issue.
26. It was noted that there are 100 year old homes and poor sidewalk conditions along Swan Street.
27. Some felt that much of Green Island's sidewalks are uneven and in terrible condition, which was conducive to safety related issues.
28. Improve the street lights and add new pedestrian amenities on the popular streets.
29. The most popular streets, George and Arch, need better street lights and pedestrian walkways.
30. The lack of sidewalks along Cohoes Avenue is a problem, particularly near the Little League Park.
31. There is some confusion regarding sidewalk repair and maintenance responsibilities
32. When there are no sidewalks people walk on streets which is dangerous and sometimes results in people getting citations.
33. It was noted that sidewalk improvements can help with the general appearance of the Village and result in new housing and business investments. It may help to inspire people to maintain their homes and neighborhoods.
34. It was suggested that sidewalks repaired block by block by increase taxes for that block's occupants until they pay off their portion of the costs, which could be offset with other funding sources (e.g., grants, bonding, etc.)
35. Some felt the Village needs more parking spaces because of the growing population.
36. Nearly \$600,000 grant was given to the Village to improve pedestrian stormwater, and traffic conditions along Albany Avenue.
37. It was noted that Cannon Street has relatively new sidewalks that are good for pedestrians and that they are plowed on snow days.
38. It was noted that Green Island looks no different now than it looked in the 50's.

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