



Local Planning Committee (LPC) Meeting #1

Monday, August 31, 2026, 5:30 to 7:30 pm | Village Hall, 2 Elting Court, Ellenville, NY 12428

Meeting Summary

Village of Ellenville Mayor Evan Trent opened the meeting by providing welcoming remarks and emphasizing the accomplishment of this investment of the NY Forward program in the Village.

Susan Landfried, New York State Department of State (DOS) Project Manager for the NY Forward Round 4 communities, explained that the LPC is a state-approved body comprising diverse members to ensure all community voices are heard. The following LPC members introduced themselves: Conor Eckert, Barbara Hoff, John Lewis, Joseph Stoeckeler, Kai Lord, Victoria Messner, Elliott Auerbach, Debbie Briggs, Rev. Gary Fuller, Cheryl LaSonde, and Kristen Osterhoudt.

After this, the remaining project team members introduced themselves. These included Christiana Kastalek, the Project Manager from the consultant team, and Lizzy Auwaerter, who is serving as the Technical Lead for the project team. John Zepko from DOS, Project Manager for Ellenville NY Forward.

Ms. Landfried provided an overview of the NY Forward program. The process involves approximately eight months of planning, culminating in a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP). Key points of the timeline include five to six LPC meetings and public engagement events, with the first engagement event scheduled for later in September. The SIP draft is expected in beginning of April, with the final version due to the state at the end of April. The project development process will involve public engagement to identify and refine eligible projects. An Open Call for Projects will be launched on September 22nd, and public feedback will be crucial in shaping the final project list. The evaluation criteria will be based on state, regional, and local goals, community support, readiness, impact, and efficient use of public resources. Eligible projects include new development of rehabilitation of existing buildings, public improvements, small project funds, and branding and marketing initiatives. Ineligible projects include standalone planning studies, operational costs, and property acquisitions. Eligible projects must be shovel-ready within two years of the award and meet specific criteria, including capacity and financing.

Ms. Landfried opened the floor to LPC questions regarding the NY Forward program and fielded several programmatic questions concerning project sponsorship and eligibility; match requirements for public and private projects; bridge financing, reimbursement procedures, prevailing wage, local labor, soft costs, transportation projects, and potential partial awards; the structure and administration of a Small Project Fund; project application, vetting, substitution, and “shovel-ready” requirements; and the NY Forward boundary, census and housing data, and processes for developing public projects and incorporating public input. Questions also addressed how public-project concepts advance through the municipality, whether projects may be sponsored by individuals or undertaken in partnership with banks, and the availability of County, municipal, nonprofit, or revolving-loan financing resources.

Following these questions, Mayor Trent outlined the NY Forward Boundary Area, which defines the area of targeted investment centered around Canal and Center Streets. The NY Forward Boundary was formed to include Berme Park and other potential public project locations.



Ms. Kastalek then introduced a preliminary demographic snapshot of downtown Ellenville. Among several of the key data points including a reported rise in housing stock and increased number of residents in poverty between 2014 and 2024 American Community Survey data. Mayor Trent mentioned that there have been previous issues with demographic statistics for the Village, including previously inflated average median income values in 2023. Ms. Kastalek said that the project team would share the data used for this snapshot and would provide further clarification/insights at LPC Meeting #2.

Ms. Kastalek then introduced three interactive activities for the LPC that included identifying opportunities and challenges in downtown Ellenville and envisioning the future of Ellenville. The results show strong support for a more vibrant, walkable, and economically diverse downtown Ellenville with more restaurants, small businesses,

Mentimeter

Provide a word or phrase that comes to mind when you envision the future of downtown Ellenville.



tourism activity, and opportunities for youth and families. Respondents also emphasized the need to address vacant properties, review demographic and housing data, and better connect revitalization efforts to local assets such as the Route 209 corridor and nearby recreational destinations. The resulting feedback was fed into a word cloud graphic as shown below.

Ms. Kastalek went on to provide an overview of the engagement process, noting that public engagement will be facilitated through various channels including a project website, digital and paper flyering, targeted stakeholder coordination, social media posts, and directed community outreach. The LPC discussed strategies to encourage broad participation, including brainstorming potential stakeholder groups such as Ellenville COFFE and various youth groups. Ms. Kastalek informed the LPC that a poll would be sent around to the LPC to identify availability and upcoming LPC Meeting dates to be scheduled. Ms. Kastalek then transitioned to emphasizing key milestones including public engagement events, reviewing and incorporating public feedback, refining projects, selecting projects, and preparing the SIP. The first public workshop is scheduled for September 22, 2026 from 6:00 to 8:00



PM. The final Strategic Investment Plan will be submitted to the state in April 2027, with funding announcement expected in late summer/fall of 2027.

Prior to the close of the LPC meeting, the public comment portion was opened. Public comments are summarized below:

- > When are project applications due?
- > Can we incorporate youth engagement?