

Village of Chittenango - NY Forward Local Planning Committee (LPC) Meeting #3

Meeting Notes

Date/Time: August 20, 2025 / 3-5pm

Place: Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum, 717 Lakeport Road

LPC Attendees: **Louis Cianfrocco**, Village of Chittenango Mayor, Co-Chair
Kipp Hicks, Madison County IDA, Co-Chair
John Bonura
Dana Kent
Allison Lehr
Jackie Mowers
Ashton Nelson (via Zoom)
Deb Rose
Melissa Stanek
Jacob Tanner
John VanDeusen

LPC Not in Attendance: **Scott Baldwin**
Carrie Montroy
Ryan Powell
Ross Relyea

State/Consultant Team: **Lissa D'Aquanni**, New York State (NYS) Department of State (DOS)
Amanda Smith, New York State (NYS) Department of State (DOS)
Melissa Davis, Empire State Development (ESD)
Zach Becker, Empire State Development (ESD)
Phil Schaeffing, Stantec
Alanna Wittet, Stantec (via Zoom)

The Village of Chittenango's third NY Forward Local Planning Committee (LPC) meeting took place on Wednesday, August 20, 2025, at the Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum. The meeting's primary purpose was to review the draft revitalization strategies, share highlights from the Downtown Profile, discuss project evaluation criteria, and preview the Village's public projects to be submitted through the Open Call. Phil Schaeffing from the consultant team presented the attached slideshow. Six members of the public signed in to observe the committee's working meeting. The Village Administrator and two Madison County planning staff members also observed the meeting.

Planning Updates

- The project team hosted a pop-up event at the August 19th Tuesdays in the Park which was well attended. They passed out flyers promoting the September 23rd Open House and collected feedback from community members about their priorities for downtown. Supporting and growing businesses, renovating buildings, and increasing amenities for kids and families such as a splash pad received the most support.
- Phil reminded LPC members that the Open Call closes on Friday, August 22. So far four NYF project applications and six Small Project Fund interest forms have been submitted.

Draft Revitalization Strategies Discussion

- Phil presented the draft strategies developed by the consultant team based on public input. The strategies identify specific action items that can be taken to support the Village's NYF vision and goals. Two to four strategies were created for each goal.
- LPC members had no comments regarding the strategies for goal #1
- An LPC member asked if the multifamily housing component of one of the Goal #2 strategies had to be restricted to the downtown area. It does not, it is meant to be broader.
- An LPC member suggested that a QR code be incorporated as a part of the gateway signage mentioned in the Goal #4 strategies. Another member noted the importance of parking for attracting visitors to the downtown and that signage for public parking should also be considered under the strategy.

Downtown Profile Highlights

- The LPC discussed what elements draw people to Chittenango and how to increase the draw
 - Cross-promoting attractions like Chittenango Falls State Park, The Wild, and others could draw people here
 - What is the goal of the Oz theme? If the village wants to increase visitors and prosperity it seems going all-in on the Oz theme would be the way to go. But not sure if that is what the community wants.
 - Some members feel there would be interest in more Oz attractions. Noted that visitors to Oz museum often ask about other Oz attractions and there are none.
 - Encourage businesses to make Oz theme more visible, like food and drink offerings, etc.
 - A lot of local businesses are not open on weekends (e.g. restaurants) – how do we work with them? If more businesses are open at the same time that would benefit all of them.

Public Projects

- Since Open Call does not close until Friday, presentation focused on potential public improvement projects by Village. These include:
 - Dr. West Park Expansion
 - Marketing & Promotion
 - Where are the Creekwalk entry points? Southern end by the pavilion and on Tuscarora Rd by Dollar Store
 - Park & Trail Enhancements
 - LPC member suggested a creek overlook in Stickles Park near the pavilion. Village unsure it owns that land however.
 - Suggestion to explore making Rt 5 crossing easier between Lions Botanical Garden and downtown – could be a project for SIP Roadmap section

Project Evaluation Discussion

- The committee discussed what other criteria or elements they would like to look for in the project submissions
 - Consideration for how projects are supporting or benefiting different parts of Chittenango's population like seniors, families etc.
 - Suggestion to explore opportunities for medical facilities that can support aging population – this could be a roadmap project
 - Also opportunities to age in place
 - Something that makes the community “sticky” – a place where people want to spend time. Things like places to be seen and places to go. Could be public spaces, types of businesses people get excited about, community events, etc.
 - Mention of project sustainability – how do we make sure the projects will be maintained over time? Project team will ask sponsors about plans to do that.

Upcoming Dates

- Phil and Lissa encouraged sponsors to submit their forms as soon as possible and even if not all the details are finalized. Projects will evolve throughout the next two months before the final LPC meeting.
- The next two committee meetings will focus on reviewing and evaluating projects
 - Goal is that by LPC #5 a draft slate of projects will be formed, pending final updates at last meeting
 - At LPC #6 final project updates will be shared and the LPC will vote on the final project slate to be submitted to State. Roadmap projects will also be discussed.
- The public Open House will occur on September 23rd at the High School. The project team will be presenting the submitted projects for public feedback. An online survey will also be available for people to weigh in after the open house. LPC attendance is not required but encouraged.

Public Comment

There was a public comment period at the end of the LPC meeting.

- One person highlighted the significant opportunity to build upon the Village's Oz assets. *Wicked for Good* is being released in November which will draw a whole new generation of Oz enthusiasts. Chittenango's Oz-Stravaganza is now the largest and longest running festival remaining in the country as other places have stopped doing them.
 - LPC discussed whether public projects could incorporate Oz theme more (e.g. augmented reality Oz tour along Creekwalk)? Some of this can come through committee discussion in the questions they ask back to sponsors and public projects. Could also be a roadmap item that is a part of economic development/tourism strategy.
 - Noted that vision statement doesn't mention Oz though it was discussed at prior LPC meeting – there are other assets the Village wants to promote too.

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- If Oz is important it can be a part of the implementation phase of the project once projects are selected.
- One long-time resident expressed support for any projects that will make the downtown more vibrant and is happy to see that prior planning work and the missions of the Village's museums are carried through in the NYF vision, goals, and strategies.
- One person shared their excitement to start the NYF process and hopefully see their project get selected.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40pm.

Please send corrections, questions, or comments regarding the meeting notes to Phil Schaeffing, project manager for the State's consultant team ([philip.schaeffing\(at\)stantec.com](mailto:philip.schaeffing@stantec.com)).

Stantec Consulting Services Inc.