

The Albany Waterway Inc.
PO Box 2142
Albany NY, 12220

September 9, 2022

Friends of the Albany Waterway!

Introduction and Why We Write To You

We provide this Call to Action to bring you up to date on our concept of creating an economically transformative Waterway to revitalize downtown Albany and benefit the Capital Region. Unlike other proposals it would bring the river to Albany instead of bringing Albany to the river. It would enter from the Hudson River just north of the USS Slater, travel along Broadway and empty back into the river through the original lock 1 of the historic Erie Canal located near the Central Warehouse. To make this a reality we need your help, particularly now as we advocate for full inclusion of this vibrant concept in a soon to occur state feasibility study. This assistance will be in the form of contributions to retain communication, engineering and environmental experts, attendance at public events, and engaging individuals and groups to join the Friends of the Albany Waterway.

Thank You!

First, thank you for your joining our Friends group! We value your interest, encouragement and support. This very exciting development will transform the Capital Region as a destination while at the same time benefitting our local residents and businesses. We began our journey last year by establishing a tax exempt not for profit corporation. We have presented to the Albany Council of Neighborhood Associations available on you tube, created a website, www.albanywaterway.org, produced a multi-page brochure and appeared before audiences explaining our concept and receiving positive feedback. We also have a Facebook page, Albany Waterway Canal Project. We know that our concept will produce significant economic and positive social impact as we have studied cities where a waterway has been created.

There is Significant Funding To Study our Proposal

Notably, Assembly Member Pat Fahy secured funding in the current state budget for a feasibility study. This will include the economic, engineering and environmental aspects of all proposals to generate important and necessary changes to access our most important natural asset, the Hudson River. It is imperative that this study fully vet our concept of a Waterway. Importantly this Waterway would not interfere with existing buildings, rail tracks and other improvements.

The Waterway is Feasible – It Can be Done

In July we had an international design firm come to Albany to present to a large audience of policy makers from the federal, state and local governments. The conclusion was that our concept was very feasible as the issues requiring solutions had been successfully addressed in many other places.

Interestingly, the creation of the Waterway would bring many environmental benefits, including solutions to Albany's chronic issues with flooding that occur due to the many sources of water flowing from our hills to the river, immersing some buildings with flooding each Spring.

This presentation was eye opening and encouraged a belief that this concept would not only be feasible but bring tremendous social and economic benefits to the community as well as deal with the climate change issues impacting our region with the rising Hudson River

Public Support is Building

The New York State Canal Corporation has been most encouraging as it has studied the tremendous benefits generated to communities along the Erie and other state canals. This includes the Canalside in Buffalo which has transformed that city. We expect to participate in preparations to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Erie Canal. Governor Hochul will host the worldwide canals and waterways conference in Buffalo in 2025. A review of our website will demonstrate the positive public reaction by our public officials.

What is the Albany Waterway Inc. doing this year?

We will be present for the New York State Canals and waterways conference in October of this year. We also expect to host a presentation for you and other community members in the Fall in order to educate you of the possibilities our concept will yield and to seek public input as we move forward. We know that nothing can be accomplished without community involvement, influence and support. We also expect to host public gatherings with representatives from cities where water has transformed their communities by generating a positive vibe, safety and economic development.

An immediate goal is to build partnerships with community groups, environmental advocates and others who recognize the transformative positive impact our concept presents.


What is our ask of you?

Your help is essential to make certain that our transformative concept is fully included in the feasibility study. We ask two things from you. To support our advocacy, we need funding to create awareness, education and support of our concept. Checks in amounts up to \$100, payable to the Albany Waterway can be sent to PO box 2142, Albany NY, 12220. We also ask you to recruit more individuals and groups to our Friends of the Albany Waterway group which is now over a third of the way toward our goal of 1,000. This can be done through our website www.albanywaterway.org or by contacting me directly. We look forward to seeing you as Partners and Friends as this concept becomes reality.

One of our guiding principles was expressed by Daniel Burnham, a noted architect and city planner in the late 19th century. He stated:

Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir the blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever- growing insistency.

Much Thanks!

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