



GOUVERNEUR

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #2 SUMMARY

Purpose:	Public Open House #2
Date and Time:	September 24, 2025, 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM
Location:	Gouverneur Community Center 4673 NY-58, Gouverneur, NY 13642

Station #1. Project Overview

Discussion

The meeting opened with an informational presentation by a New York State representative on the New York Forward program.

This public open house-style session included interactive activity stations which provided an overview of the NY Forward Process and outreach conducted to-date, how projects were identified and evaluated, a project gallery, and where to find further information. New York State Department of State (DOS) representatives and MJ Engineering team members were available to answer questions and discuss ideas with the public. Attendees were provided a participant guide for the following activity stations.

- **Station #1 - Project Overview:** The what, why, who and how of NY Forward.
- **Station #2 – Shaping Downtown’s Future:** The vision, goals, and context for encouraging new investment downtown.
- **Station #3 – Identifying Priority Projects in Downtown Gouverneur:** The process for collecting and evaluating project proposals.
- **Station #4 – Project Gallery:** On each board, tell us which goals each project helps achieve and how the projects will improve downtown.
- **Station #5 – Thinking About Public Spaces:** On the maps, identify your ideas for public spaces in downtown. What improvements would you like to see and where. How are these spaces used already? What can be added?
- **Station #6 – Other Thoughts and Ideas:** Have more to share? Write it down at this station!
- **Station #7 – Kids Table:** This is a place for kids to be creative and share their ideas.

Station #2. Shaping Downtown's Future

Discussion

This station provided an overview of the downtown Vision, Goals, Strategies, and NY Forward Boundary.

Downtown Gouverneur Vision

"Nestled along the Oswegatchie River, downtown Gouverneur will be a safe, friendly and walkable environment, honoring its historical charm, vibrant and expanding downtown business community and its proximity to major regional employers. Through an enhanced quality of life, and increased opportunities for residents and visitors, the village will highlight its rich recreational, cultural, and retail assets, positioning the community as a regional destination."

Goal 1: Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy

Continue the momentum from the NY Forward grant awards and invest in downtown to bring all downtown storefronts into productive use by supporting building renovations, reducing barriers for small businesses, and enhancing/marketing the appeal and economic vitality of Gouverneur's historic downtown.

Goal 2: Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency

Improve public spaces, expand recreational opportunities, and strengthen downtown's role as a vibrant community hub.

Goal 3: Become a Regional Destination

Attract Visitors to downtown by promoting local businesses, cultural assets, and events.

Goal 4: Improve Walkability & Connections Downtown

Create a safe, accessible, and connected network of sidewalks and walking paths that strengthen connections between key destinations.

Station #3. Identifying Priority Projects in Downtown Gouverneur

Discussion

This station provided an overview of how the projects were evaluated by the LPC and the project proposals that were submitted through the Open Call for Projects.

Call for Projects

- The public was invited to submit project proposal for Local Planning Committee consideration. The Call for Projects was opened from **June 17 to July 31, 2025**.
- Advertised via project website, press release and printed flyers
- Virtual office hours to answer questions and provided guidance on the NY Forward application process
- Introductory presentation and Q&A session held on June 17, 2025
- All potential projects had to complete a NYF project complete a NYF project submission through the Open Call, even if submitted in the community's NYF application

Project Proposals Submitted

- A01 Streetscape Walkability Improvements



Station #3. Identifying Priority Projects in Downtown Gouverneur

Discussion

- A02 Downtown Accessibility
- A03 Village Green Improvements
- A04 Municipal Office Building Façade Improvements
- A05 Pedestrian Plaza
- B01 Redevelopment of 43 & 47 Main Street
- B02 W Main Street Apartment Renovation
- B03 Energy-efficient Jumbo's Diner
- B04 Small Town Supply Resiliency Hub
- B05 Redevelopment of 127-135 E Main Street
- B06 Modernization of 55 E Main Street
- B07 91 E Main Street Commercial Space
- B08 Frary Funeral Home Improvements
- B09 Office Renovations at 107 E Main Street
- B10 Adaptive Reuse of 10-20 Park Street
- B11 Adaptive Reuse of 22 Park Street
- C01 Small Project Fund

- 17 Proposed Projects Received
- \$18.9 Million in Requested Funds
- \$6-8 Million Target Funding Request

Eligible Project Types/Activities

- Public Improvement Projects
 - Streetscape and transportation improvements, recreational trails, new and upgraded parks, plazas, public art, green infrastructure, and other public realm projects.
- New Development and/or Rehabilitation of Existing Downtown Buildings
 - Development and redevelopment of real property for mixed-use, commercial, residential, not for profit, or public uses. Development/Redevelopment should result in employment opportunities, housing choices or other community services.
- Small Project Grant Fund
 - A locally managed matching small project fund for small downtown projects, such as façade improvements, building renovations, business assistance, or public art.
- Branding and Marketing
 - Downtown branding and marketing projects that target residents, tourists, investors, developers and visitors.

Ineligible Project Types/Activities

- Planning Activities
 - All NYF funds must be used to implement projects.
- Operations and Maintenance
 - Funds cannot be used for on-going or routine expenses, such as staff salaries and wages, rent, utilities, and property up-keep.
- Pre-award Costs

Station #3. Identifying Priority Projects in Downtown Gouverneur

Discussion

- Reimbursement for costs incurred before the completion of the Strategic Investment Plan and the announcement of funding awards is not permitted.
- Property Acquisition
 - NYF funds cannot be used for property acquisition.
- Training and Other Program Expenses
 - NYF funds cannot be used to cover continuous costs, such as training costs and expenses related to existing programs.
- Expenses relating to Existing Programs
 - NYF funds cannot supplement existing programs or replace existing resources.

Station #4. Project Gallery

Discussion

This station provided an overview of the projects continuing forward in the evaluation process. This station included a board for each proposed project with a project description, image, map location and asked participants to answer the question “which goal(s) does this project help address?” by placing a sticker with an icon representing the corresponding goal(s). Participants were also asked to finish the statement “This project will Improve downtown by...” by writing their opinion(s) on a post-it note.

A01 – Streetscape Walkability Improvements

This Streetscape Improvements project will enhance pedestrian connectivity, safety, and accessibility throughout the downtown core of Gouverneur. The project includes the construction of new sidewalks and clearly marked crosswalks; installation of pedestrian-scale lighting to improve visibility and safety; planting of street trees; and placement of new street furniture, including benches, bike racks, and trash receptacles. The project also includes the installation of wayfinding signage to guide visitors and highlight downtown amenities.

- Total Project Cost: \$2,358,000
- Total NYF Request: \$2,358,000

Which goal(s) does this project help address?

- Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy: 2
- Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency: 9
- Become a Regional Destination: 0
- Improve Walkability and Connections Downtown: 1

This project will improve downtown by... (written as presented, in no particular order)

- The trees are the reason the sidewalk are repaved. New sidewalks yes! Trees no. **(one other comment agreed)**
- This is desperately needed. But not just along Main Street in the front of those buildings
- Very Nice
- This enhances the quality of life for all – not just some!
- The best suggestion I’ve seen/read/heard here
- Good project will help all, not just some

Station #4. Project Gallery

Discussion

- Benches yes. Will the village police enforce parking & crosswalk
- A05 better use of \$\$\$. Couple A01 with it but use less \$ on A01
- How come our village, like other small villages Can't afford/have posters of deceased vets, like even Little Russell has. Or.... Beautiful hanging flowers over Main St.

A05 – Pedestrian Plaza

This project proposes transforming the area behind the buildings on E. Main Street to a welcoming pedestrian zone/public space with the purpose of improving connections to businesses and providing opportunities for business expansion.

- Total Project Cost: \$2,609,000
- Total NYF Request: \$2,609,000

Which goal(s) does this project help address?

- Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy: 4
- Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency: 9
- Become a Regional Destination: 1
- Improve Walkability and Connections Downtown: 1

This project will improve downtown by... (written as presented, in no particular order)

- Need out back parking
- No... Homeless and druggies will hang out here
- Cuts down on moped-ability
- Better use of funds than others
- This is very nice
- Yes!!! Creative & friendly space. Need dedicated parking spaces for residents of Main St.
- Where are mopeds gonna go?
- This is nice but puts a big hole for parking
- Is this benefitting one business or all the way to other end??
- This makes the most sense – has the greatest impact on all

B01 – Redevelopment of 43 & 47 Main Street

This project involves the redevelopment of 2 combined properties into a mixed-use building featuring 2 ground-floor commercial storefronts and 8 1-bedroom apartments across the 2nd and 3rd floors. Planned work includes the full design and construction of updated front and rear entrances, complete replacement of all interior flooring, wall finishes, plumbing, electrical systems, and HVAC. The project will also include the installation of new, energy-efficient windows on both the front and rear facades to improve building performance and enhance the appearance of the downtown streetscape.

- Total Project Cost: \$535,000
- Total NYF Request: \$149,000

Which goal(s) does this project help address?

- Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy: 0
- Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency: 1
- Become a Regional Destination: 0

Station #4. Project Gallery

Discussion

- Improve Walkability and Connections Downtown: 1

This project will improve downtown by... (written as presented, in no particular order)

- None
- I looked up these addresses on google maps. They don't exist, very confusing as to east or west or Main Street. Therefore, application should be omitted
- Are the apartments rent controlled? We need 2+ bedroom apartments
- Don't need any more apartments
- This project is pure profit for the owners & does not support any of the four goals (**one other comment agreed**)
- Will the rent be subsidized? Gouverneur does not need 1-bedroom apartments

B02 – W Main Street Apartment Renovation

This project will create 3 new apartments in downtown – 1 at 3 W Main St. and 3 at 5 W Main St. Ongoing renovations at 3 W Main St. have already created 3 apartments currently with tenants and the proposed project will complete the renovations. 5 W Main St. is currently inhabitable and requires full replacement of plumbing, electrical, and heating systems. The project also includes upgrades to on-side parking and pedestrian access, and landscaping to better connect the property with surrounding downtown infrastructure.

- Total Project Cost: \$189,000
- Total NYF Request: \$47,000

Which goal(s) does this project help address?

- Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy: 0
- Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency: 0
- Become a Regional Destination: 0
- Improve Walkability and Connections Downtown: 1

This project will improve downtown by... (written as presented, in no particular order)

- None
- No way should this money play for a personal apartment for the owner to profit from
- No! None!
- No!
- How does 6 apartments in one building support any of the 4 goals?
- Has already received enough great funds. Millions of \$, tax breaks, etc. in Gouverneur & neighboring communities
- Really! I don't think so
- How does this help us?
- I really don't see this helping us.
- We need family apartments. No. This sounds like having the state fund the investments
- Absolutely not... tenants will be sitting at existing bistro tables!
- This benefits me how!

B03 – Energy-Efficient Jumbo's Diner

Station #4. Project Gallery

Discussion

The proposed project will build upon prior improvements to create a mixed-use building that houses Jumbo's Diner and 4 apartments. The project includes replacement and upgrades to the 3,000SF building's façade including new windows, entrance ramps and weather-protected entrance. It also proposes upgrades to the building's electrical, gas, and HVAC systems which would benefit the restaurant operation.

- Total Project Cost: \$344,000
- Total NYF Request: \$86,000

Which goal(s) does this project help address?

- Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy: 0
- Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency: 0
- Become a Regional Destination: 0
- Improve Walkability and Connections Downtown: 1

This project will improve downtown by... (written as presented, in no particular order)

- Who benefits from this? Not the taxpayer
- Bad idea, bad bad bad
- Jumbo's keeps switching management citing profit issues, how will they fix that? (Closing with no notice to employees) **Two other comments agreed with this statement**

B04 – Small Town Supply Resiliency Hub

The purpose of this project is to improve Small Town Supply to be able to provide power and distribute supplies during emergencies. Planned improvements include the installation of emergency power systems (such as solar with battery backup or generators), enhanced interior and exterior lighting, and secure storage for emergency supplies. The project will also improve accessibility and safety through the construction of ADA-compliant entrances, clearly marked emergency access points, and expanded covered areas for outdoor staging and supply distribution.

- Total Project Cost: \$386,000
- Total NYF Request: \$97,000

Which goal(s) does this project help address?

- Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy: 0
- Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency: 0
- Become a Regional Destination: 0
- Improve Walkability and Connections Downtown: 1

This project will improve downtown by... (written as presented, in no particular order)

- Elevator yes!
- None
- Ace comp. bought out Aubuchon Hardware Corp around 8 months ago
- No (2x)
- We do not need any additions to our hardware services. We have four. This only makes a monopoly of this business.
- We have 4 "hardware Stores" there is no shortage.

Station #4. Project Gallery

Discussion

- Should already be ADA compliant
- This has already been upgraded

B06 – Modernization of 55 East Main Street

This project aims to modernize 1,600 sf of mixed-use space downtown with energy-efficiency and accessibility improvements. Planned improvements include interior and exterior upgrades to the 1st floor, such as new windows, brick repairs, energy efficient lighting and HVAC, and replacement of sidewalk. 2nd floor improvements include a new HVAC system to allow for new commercial or residential space. The project also includes security cameras and a new gate for the courtyard.

- Total Project Cost: \$241,000
- Total NYF Request: \$68,000

Which goal(s) does this project help address?

- Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy: 8
- Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency: 8
- Become a Regional Destination: 0
- Improve Walkability and Connections Downtown: 0

This project will improve downtown by... (written as presented, in no particular order)

- Are you kidding me NO!!!
- This will improve the appearance of downtown
- Not good
- This is one of the bldg's most visible from public park used for events
- No absolutely not!
- Not!
- No!
- I believe this is exactly what the NY Forward program is about. It will be so beautiful as you drive through our community and it is an existing business in our downtown business area. Which is what that area is all about. Big yes from me!

B07 – East Main Street Commercial Space

The proposed project will improve 2,500 sf of unfished space into 2 new commercial businesses. Planned construction includes the demolition and replacement of approximately 100 linear feet of deteriorated sidewalk, replacement of 21 windows, installation of new furnaces, completion of electrical and plumbing systems, insulation, ceilings, new flooring, and repair of stairs leading to upper-floor apartments. Exterior upgrades will include masonry repairs. The renovated commercial space is intended to house two separate businesses—massage therapy and a potential barbershop or barber school.

- Total Project Cost: \$100,000
- Total NYF Request: \$25,000

Which goal(s) does this project help address?

- Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy: 6
- Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency: 3

Station #4. Project Gallery

Discussion

- Become a Regional Destination: 0
- Improve Walkability and Connections Downtown: 1

This project will improve downtown by... (written as presented, in no particular order)

- Sounds like this project has solid businesses planned! Jobs & customers
- This does not fit the needs of development for the community
- We need business clothing shops
- We have 6 hair places in Gouverneur. 4 on Main Street
- Get a massage but no place to buy a pair of jeans?

B09 – Office Renovation at 107 East Main Street

This project will renovate the 3,800 sf building that currently houses Case & Leader Law Office, Freeway Insurance, and TLC Realty. Planned improvements include full façade restoration, renovation of the 2nd floor to create additional office space or a residential apartment, and replacement of the deteriorated rear concrete deck to ensure safe and functional access for all 3 businesses.

- Total Project Cost: \$171,000
- Total NYF Request: \$43,000

Which goal(s) does this project help address?

- Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy: 4
- Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency: 1
- Become a Regional Destination: 0
- Improve Walkability and Connections Downtown: 2

This project will improve downtown by... (written as presented, in no particular order)

- No (2x)
- I'm all for this! Will improve the appearance bigly
- No more apts. No benefit
- Not for this
- No one is coming to Gouverneur to use these services. It's only people in Gouverneur that will use this.
- Doesn't benefit public/community
- Or you could move Case & Leader and give us back our movie theater!!

B10 – Adaptive Reuse of 10-20 Park Street

The proposed project involves the phased renovation and adaptive reuse of multiple connected properties to create 6,400 sf of refreshed commercial, office, residential, and storage space in downtown. 3 ground-floor retail units will be improved with new bathrooms, lighting, flooring, and finish work. The long-vacant 2nd-floor offices will be reused as loft-style residential/ office units with new bathrooms, HVAC, electrical, and wall/ceiling repairs. A connected, former machine shop, will be renovated into a storage structure including electrical, lighting, window, roof, and siding repairs. A new sidewalk will also be installed.

- Total Project Cost: \$200,000
- Total NYF Request: \$50,000

Station #4. Project Gallery

Discussion

Which goal(s) does this project help address?

- Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy: 0
- Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency: 0
- Become a Regional Destination: 0
- Improve Walkability and Connections Downtown: 0

This project will improve downtown by... (written as presented, in no particular order)

- No!
- This sounds like it's trying to flip the property
- Not helping the taxpayer
- What about the crappy sidewalk? Sounds like an investment for resell to remain vacant. What business does this bring in on its own?

B11 – Adaptive Reuse of 22 Park Street

Involves the adaptive reuse of a 4,000 sf 1880s residential building, previously used as a doctor's office, to restore its function as a professional building. The scope includes planning, designing, and constructing interior modifications such as installing 3 walls and doors, removing an apartment staircase, refreshing the front portions of the 1st and 2nd floors, and completing phone, data, and cable installations. Exterior work includes repainting both the main and carriage houses, replacing the sidewalk, installing a new floor in the carriage house, and improving the wrap-around driveway, parking area, and undeveloped back lot.

- Total Project Cost: \$105,000
- Total NYF Request: \$26,000

Which goal(s) does this project help address?

- Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy: 1
- Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency: 0
- Become a Regional Destination: 0
- Improve Walkability and Connections Downtown: 1

This project will improve downtown by... (written as presented, in no particular order)

- No, benefits to community, No!
- Who owns this & will benefit from the resale?
- This does not fit the needs of development for the community
- No! (2x)
- How does this benefit anyone but the owner?
- Not necessary. What does this do to improve and grow as a whole
- This is not a community improvement
- Sounds like an investment to resell. What business is this?
- Absolutely not! No benefit to the community

C01 – Small Project Fund

This project will establish a locally managed matching fund to undertake a range of smaller downtown revitalization projects including facade improvements, interior and exterior building renovations for

Station #4. Project Gallery

Discussion

commercial or mixed-use spaces, business assistance, public art, permanently affixed signage and awnings, commercial interior fit-out, HVAC, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing. Applications to this small project fund will be required to provide a minimum of 25% of the overall project cost as a matching contribution, leveraging private funds to achieve an even greater transformative impact in downtown Gouverneur.

- Total Project Cost: \$390,000
- Total NYF Request: \$90,000

Which goal(s) does this project help address?

- Strengthen & Expand the Local Economy: 3
- Enhance Quality of Life & Community Resiliency: 0
- Become a Regional Destination: 0
- Improve Walkability and Connections Downtown: 0

This project will improve downtown by... (written as presented, in no particular order)

- This was denied in other regions.
- Can you do anything for our churches??
- This project was denied in Cantons application? How does Gouverneur expect to make this a need to NYS?

Station #5. Thinking About Public Spaces

Discussion

This station included a board for each public improvement project with before and after (renderings) images allowing participants to pinpoint various improvements that would benefit the public spaces within downtown.

A01 – Streetscape Walkability Improvements

What would make you spend more time downtown?

Comments (written as presented, in no particular order):

- Full storefronts, activities in the park
- More retail, more food, vibrant colors not dark dull colors

How could this space be made to feel more welcoming for all ages?

Comments (written as presented, in no particular order):

- This would benefit all during events

How would you like to enjoy this space?

Comments (written as presented, in no particular order):

- The trees cover the buildings and cause the sidewalk lifting

A05 – Pedestrian Plaza

What would make you spend more time downtown?

Comments (written as presented, in no particular order):

- A boat launch would be nice... but notal within your zone

Station #5. Thinking About Public Spaces

Discussion

How could this space be made to feel more welcoming for all ages?

Comments (written as presented, in no particular order):

- N/A

How would you like to enjoy this space?

Comments (written as presented, in no particular order):

- This would greatly benefit the public during events
- Nice
- What happens to the delivery trucks that service these businesses?
- I like this but I am concerned about parking
- I like because it would truly benefit people not private entities
- Would be nice if more people could see it – this is in back

This station also included a map of downtown Gouverneur enabling participants to identify ideas regarding public spaces within downtown asking what improvements the participants would like to see and where.

No comments were provided on the maps.

Station #6. Other Thoughts and Ideas

Discussion

This station included an opportunity for any additional thoughts and ideas. The thoughts shared are listed below (written as presented, in no particular order):

- Don't believe everything you see on Facebook
- I would like to see better streetlights for people who have to work at night
- Feedback from the community included the youth, what about them? Would have loved to see other community members have a part.
- Is there a point in proving the downtown spaces when there is a smoke shop that is an eyesore form being broken into?
- How about fix the town's municipal parks lot of all these businesses with proposals utilize
- A lot of these proposal do not directly affect the taxpayers. Who is coming to Gouverneur with a commercial business? Who can afford rent for the office spaces?
- I also agree with the comments about the 1-bedroom apartments – we need 2-3 bedroom apartments for families
- We need retail, we need restaurants, we need to utilize the Oswegatchie as recreational. We don't need private sector dollars going towards apartments ... we not have parking we have enough low income without you adding to it and destroying our village more.

Station #7. Kids Table
Discussion
This was a place for kids to be creative and share their ideas.

This meeting summary conveys our understanding of the items discussed and agreements reached at this meeting. Please forward any additions, corrections and/or questions to my attention.

Submitted by:
Kerry Gibson, MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.

cc: Consultant Team, State Team, Local Planning Committee

DRAFT