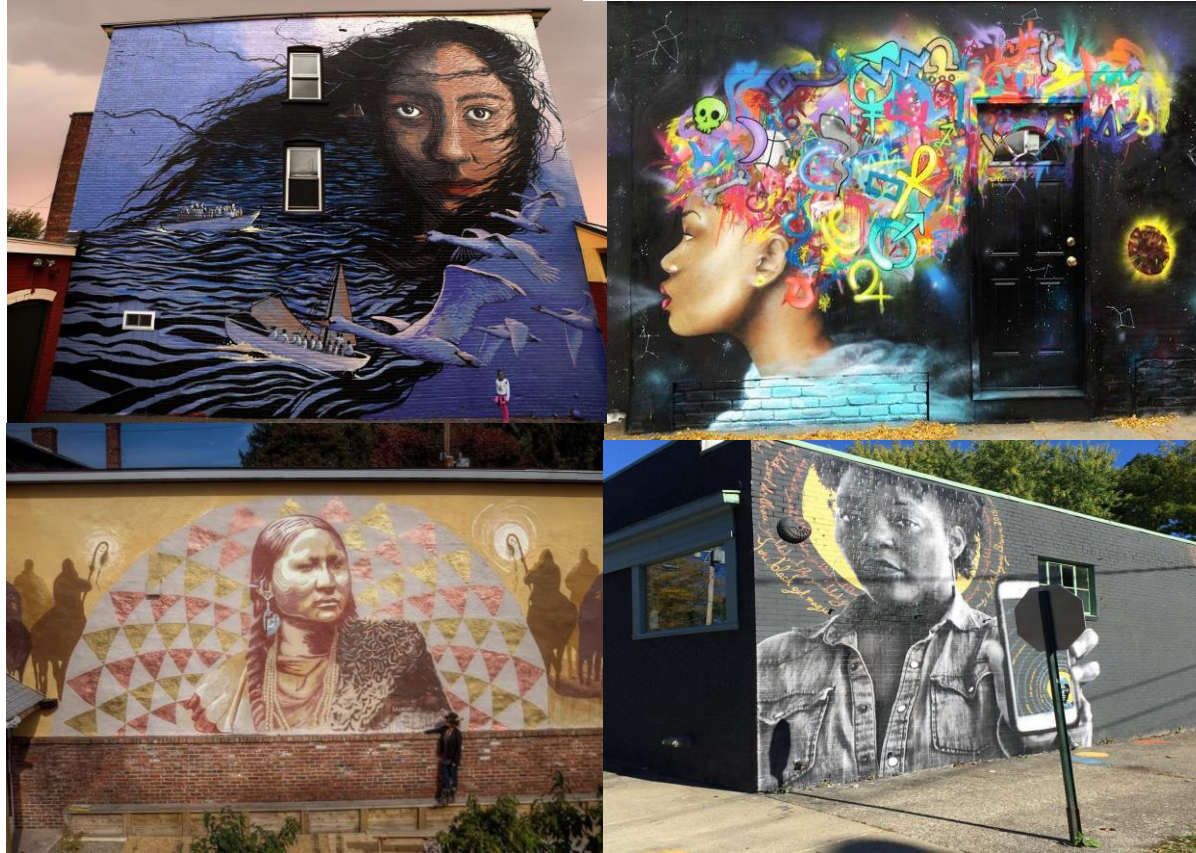


# MIDTOWN KINGSTON CULTURAL ASSETS MAPPING PROJECT



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CREDITS

Report and maps produced by Hone Strategic LLC



Jennifer Schwartz Berky, Principal  
Michaela A. Sweeney, Associate

35 Hone Street  
Kingston, NY 12401  
[www.honestrategic.com](http://www.honestrategic.com)

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1. Develop and implement a communications plan to raise awareness of the project and its findings.
2. Maintain Data on Midtown's Arts District.
3. Integrate findings of this Cultural Asset report into a serious strategy for economic development in Kingston.
4. Integrate findings of this Cultural Assets report into a plan for the Arts District and equitable development in Midtown Kingston.
5. Continue to Incorporate Stakeholder Input and Community Engagement

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# INTRODUCTION

## Purpose and Goals

This report and series of cultural asset maps are part of a larger effort to provide planning and development guidance for Midtown Kingston. The area's growing arts district and creative economy is experiencing increased investment and development activity, which have been a source of concern about displacement caused by gentrification. This project is focused on identifying the cultural resources that form a "cluster" of activity that may be utilized strategically to make investments that support job creation and "community wealth building," which are the building blocks to achieving a more stable economic environment.

The primary goal of creating a cultural asset map is to inform strategies to engage and build upon the cultural assets and resources embedded within a community. Multiple stakeholder groups, residents, and community leaders provided input for this project. The results of creating a cultural assets inventory and map can provide community with the tools and data to pursue cultural district planning; identify hubs, linkages, networks; increase knowledge and appreciation for what currently exists; identify gaps; gain new perspectives; and inform future community planning initiatives.<sup>1</sup> These can be used to leverage creative and cultural capital to improve the "architecture of community"—the social capital, public assets, market relations, and flows that comprise and support a community.<sup>2</sup> This project provides a holistic evaluation of Midtown's existing cultural assets and recommends how these assets can be leveraged in Midtown to promote equitable and inclusive development strategies to complement Kingston's comprehensive plan.

The main goals of the Midtown Cultural Assets Mapping Project are:

1. To inventory and map Midtown's cultural assets;
2. To assess cultural assets within the context of Midtown Kingston's history, present conditions, and future visions; and
3. To contribute to larger planning for equitable development in Midtown.

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<sup>1</sup> Cultural Mapping Toolkit, 2010 Legacies Now & Creative City Network of Canada

<sup>2</sup> (Nowak 2007)

This project is intended to provide the City of Kingston with up-to-date data and resources for better understanding Midtown's cultural assets, and the implications of developing or supporting these resources for land use, infrastructure, and development incentives. Individual investors and developers that are interested in relocating to Midtown can use the findings of this study to better understand the cultural foundations of the community and where they can fit in within the larger context. This is especially valuable to new arts businesses looking to relocate to Kingston's Midtown Arts District. Existing community members can use the information available in this report to learn more about Midtown's rich cultural landscape and identify areas for further study or district improvement.

As a Greenway community and Greenway-funded projects, this study advances all 5 Greenway Criteria:

- **Natural and Cultural Resource Protection:** careful revitalization of historic inner city; coordinated implementation of growth and preservation activities.
- **Economic Development:** inclusive revitalization of district "in transition"
- **Regional planning:** furthering regional and county housing and "priority growth areas" goals
- **Public Access:** coordination with "Greenline" trail to Kingston waterfront
- **Heritage and Environmental Education:** active participation of heritage and educational leaders

### Scope of Work

A Cultural Resources Survey (funded by Greenway and completed last year) created a tabulated list of Midtown's historic properties and laid a foundation for this next step. This last survey provides an opportunity for parallel outreach to comprehensively consider all of Midtown's cultural assets and bring community members into the planning process. With the help of multiple stakeholder groups, residents, and community leaders, this project identifies and characterizes the resources, organizations, businesses, people, historic structures, events, current plans, and projects that shape Midtown.

The deliverables for this project include:

1. An inventory and map of Midtown Kingston's cultural assets;
2. An analysis and discussion of cultural assets within their neighborhood context; and
3. A strategy for a detailed "asset-based" plan that can be adopted by the City and implemented as an element of its comprehensive plan.

A centralized and comprehensive database of Midtown's cultural assets has never been developed before. Over the years, organizations and individuals have collected information about Midtown's cultural resources in different ways and for different purposes but have never integrated their findings within the context of broader community and economic development efforts. This study utilizes the "Cultural Resources Framework" developed by Millier Dickenson Blais to consolidate and organize information about Midtown's assets. By consolidating existing data from multiple sources, coding these data into a consistent set of categories, and mapping them, a baseline of information can be collaboratively shared and updated by all involved stakeholders. Furthermore, this framework will provide new insights and approaches for integrating cultural development activities with overall neighborhood revitalization goals. Specific recommendations derived from the findings of this study address:

- Mechanisms for the designation of the arts district, including incentives and zoning changes;
- Inclusionary zoning recommendations for housing to protect existing residents;
- Strategies for preservation and rehabilitation of existing, deteriorated housing stock, including an increase of programs for avoiding displacement (e.g., housing trust fund, weatherization, energy upgrades); and
- Actions for inclusion in comprehensive plan.

This project incorporates work done by the City of Kingston via Certified Local Government funds from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.. Collaborators include the City's Arts District Steering Committee, Family of Woodstock, and RUPCO. Each has committed to extensive in-kind support for the project through coordinated outreach on RUPCO's survey in the same project area and will work with CCE and volunteers to integrate respondents into a participatory process for the strategy and

deliverables described above. This work was supported by funding from the City of Kingston's Economic and Community Development Office through the assistance of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant funding.

## Cultural Development and Neighborhood Revitalization

Many post-industrial cities pursue the arts and creative development as a tool for economic growth and business attraction, but often overlook the role and involvement of such assets as components of broader community development and planning initiatives.<sup>3</sup> Many cities often pursue development strategies that seek to support a "creative economy" or attract a "creative-class" as an economic growth strategy. However, disregard to local cultural context or urban neighborhood involvement often leads to exclusion, gentrification, and displacement.<sup>4</sup> Investments in community-based arts and cultural activities provide valuable contributions to the "architecture of community," which comprises social capital, public assets, market relations, and flows that support a community.<sup>5</sup> While nurturing the cultural and creative sectors can drive new forms of economic activity, it can also:

1. **Improve community connections.** Cultural and arts-based festivals, events, workshops, and programs bring people together and strengthen social ties between community members, leading to increased trust, social capital, and stronger collective efficacy.
2. **Enhance public infrastructure.** As a critical component of placemaking, cultural investments are investments in not only people, but also places and their supporting infrastructure. The arts give public spaces character and can contribute to the vitality and improvement of schools, libraries, parks, and even public transportation.
3. **Generate market activity.** Small businesses and real estate markets improve as a result of creative placemaking. People seek to live, work, and play in places that are interesting and vibrant, and the creative sector can unleash new opportunities for supporting the development of small businesses and raising property values.

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<sup>3</sup> Green, G.P. and Haines, A. (2008). Asset building and community development. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

<sup>4</sup> (Rosenstein 2009)

<sup>5</sup> (Nowak 2007)



4. **Create new connections.** Nurturing cultural and creative capital can improve the flows of information, capital, and people between places. For example, the development of a new arts center can bring together artists of all kinds, fostering new relationships and collaborations. As an extension community development, it can work to integrate and strengthen distressed and isolated neighborhoods with the rest of the city.

Before pursuing plans and policies to develop a city's creative and cultural sectors, such as the development of an arts district, cities must assess their current cultural assets, how they are embedded within the community, and the functions they serve. Furthermore, they must be placed with the context of a community's history, current conditions, and future visions to fully unlock their potential for future neighborhood and revitalization initiatives. Such a comprehensive approach provides insights about new spatial, social, and economic networks and connections that can be leveraged or pursued. An existing conditions analysis and cultural asset mapping are the foundational starting point to support this type of work.

## CONTEXT AND VISIONS: MIDTOWN KINGSTON'S CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Midtown Kingston, defined as the cluster of neighborhoods surrounding Broadway, Cornell Street, Greenkill Avenue, and the railroad tracks, is the heart of Kingston's urban core. Midtown is the physical center of the city, an area (or "district") of dense, mixed-use neighborhoods with located between Kingston's two other primary business districts: the Rondout (downtown) and the Stockade (uptown) --all of which are connected by Broadway. Midtown is more than one neighborhood. It contains a remarkably heterogeneous ensemble of industrial, institutional, residential, and commercial structures. Its neighborhoods are also home to the city's most diverse and lowest-income households.



Despite decades of disinvestment and decline in this area of Kingston, it has become a magnet for creative enterprises, non-profit arts organizations, and (more recently) an active real estate market. There is an ever-growing need and interest to develop strategies for revitalizing Midtown's neighborhoods and commercial corridors in a way that inclusive and equitable. As a growing creative and cultural hub in the region, Midtown Kingston has the potential to utilize its assets as a mechanism for strengthening its community

and social capital, public infrastructure, economic assets, and regional connections. The remainder of this chapter presents a comprehensive account of Midtown's historical past, current conditions, and visions for future development. An understanding of the community can inform ways in which cultural assets can be leveraged to improve or strengthen the community as a whole.

Throughout this report and its maps, Midtown Kingston is defined as the .75 square mile area bordered by Clinton and Marys avenues to the south, Albany Avenue to the west, Foxhall Avenue to the northeast, and Westchester Avenue to the east. This "definition" was originally developed by the City of Kingston in their application for a Downtown Revitalization Initiatives grant for Midtown. It seeks to represent the cluster of residential neighborhoods and commercial corridors surrounding Broadway, Cornell Street, Greenkill Avenue, and the railroad tracks. It spans parts of seven U.S. Census-designated block groups and three census tracts.<sup>6</sup>



## PAST: History of Midtown's Development

### Becoming the Center of the New City

Midtown Kingston is the city's physical center and a historic central business district. It suffered greatly in the post-World War II era from red-lining, absentee landlords, and "white flight" as the growth of IBM and auto-centric development brought sprawl to the surrounding area.

Midtown grew up as a result of growing pains in the villages of Kingston and Rondout, two very different communities. The larger village of Rondout was made up of immigrants and workers, whereas Kingston contained a more gentrified class of old families, lawyers, bankers and land owners. In the aftermath of consolidation, the construction of City Hall in 1872 and the West Shore Railroad in 1883 created the outlines of this new district as a "year round port on the Hudson River" (Evers 2005, p. 332). The new railroad drew new industries to the community, including what were former sweatshops in New York City that were trying to avoid the rise of

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<sup>6</sup> While these block groups do not directly align with the project area boundaries, they provide the best available data on the spatial distribution of the population's demographic conditions. All demographic data throughout this chapter, unless otherwise noted, were obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) 2015 5-year estimates dataset. Demographic information in the seven block groups and three census tracts have been aggregated to provide a snapshot of the study area's overall conditions.

unions and controls over working conditions after the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire. These companies included cigar makers, the U.S. Lace Curtain Mills, and Jacobson's, Fessenden's and others making pajamas, dresses, shirtwaists, and underwear.

By the 1890s, with the addition of the railroad and improved roads eclipsing the D&H Canal's supremacy and closure, the extractive industries began to fade. Midtown industrial district grew during WWI and WWII, notably around the rail corridor. These included the enlargement of Apollo and Electrol magneto plants, the Lorillard refrigerator factory, Diamond Truck and Car Gear Company and Peckham Industries for truck and automobile gear, and the U.S. Lace Curtain Mills on Foxhall Avenue and Cornell Street (now the Lace Mill Artist Lofts). Trolleys also began running on Broadway at that time, superseding the old horse cars.


The decline of Midtown in the first half of the 20th century is described by Jack Braunlein in his survey of Midtown's architectural history:

The seeds of economic decline, however, were born in the fruit of so much success. The D&H Canal ceased operations due largely to competition from the railroads. The invention of Portland Cement provided a cheaper alternative to Bluestone and Rosendale Cement, and by the end of the 19th century, those industries had floundered. In the early 20th century, competition from steamboats and automobiles led to changes in recreational venues. These factors, coupled with the effects of the Great Depression, led to the closing of the Kingston Point amusement park and a decline in the fortunes of the City itself. World War II provided a brief boost to the sagging economy, especially in the shipbuilding businesses along the Rondout Creek where minesweepers, submarine chasers, PT boats, and barges and scows were built.

The postwar construction of the New York State Thruway opened new areas for development and resulted in a departure of businesses and residences from the city center to Ulster County. Similarly, the establishment of an IBM plant just outside the city limits brought prosperity to the area but accelerated the development of economic opportunities outside of the city center.

An example of the waxing and waning of industrial fortunes has been documented by City historian Ed Ford in his monograph on in the stream of businesses occupying 85 Grand Street. In 1889, the Peckham Motor Truck and Wheel

Company – manufactures of wheel assemblies for electric railroads and trolleys – had a plant built at Grand and Ten Broeck. In 1906 the company experienced financial difficulties and was sold to the New York Car and Truck Company. This company, which made the ill-fated Allen-Kingston car, went out of business and sold the factory in 1911 to the W. A. Wood Manufacturing Company. In a few years, Wood experienced financial difficulty and filed for bankruptcy. The Emerson Motors Company took over operations in 1916. When it failed a year later, operations were assumed by the Campbell Motor Car Company. Campbell operated until 1921. Apollo Magneto Corporation moved into the building in 1922 and shared the premises with other manufacturing businesses. In 1938 Apollo, which made magnetos and couplings for Ford cars and trucks, shared the space with Electrol, Inc. Aircraft Division, which made hydraulic equipment. During the War, Apollo made airplane starters and Electrol was manufacturing airplane parts. By 1950, Apollo was gone, and Hucktrol took over operations in 1964. Today the building is owned by AllWays Moving and shares the space with several other businesses.

The decline in Kingston's economic fortunes had a devastating impact on the City's built environment. By the 1960s, much of the Rondout, and many other areas in the City, consisted of run-down, deteriorated or abandoned buildings. In an effort to clear Kingston off what were perceived to be "antiquated" buildings and substandard housing and to replace them with new buildings, an aggressive Urban renewal policy was put into place in 1964. Demolition of important buildings – including 18th –century stone houses in the Uptown area -- began. Although not as extensive as in Rondout where one of the nation's largest urban renewal efforts leveled entire City blocks, significant buildings were lost in Midtown that could tell the story of its role in the history of America's Industrial Revolution and the development of transportation. Few buildings rose to replace the loss. So few new buildings were planned, in fact, that in response to this one-sided enactment of "renewal," during their meeting of July 12, 1966, members of the Common Council passed a resolution later forwarded to the Urban Renewal Agency calling for an immediate cessation of demolition activities. Three weeks later, a local law was passed creating the Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission, stating that "no structure shall be altered, repaired, removed or demolished which has been designated as an historic site or historic landmark." Efforts undertaken by the Commission resulted in the listing of landmark buildings and historic districts to the National Register. 

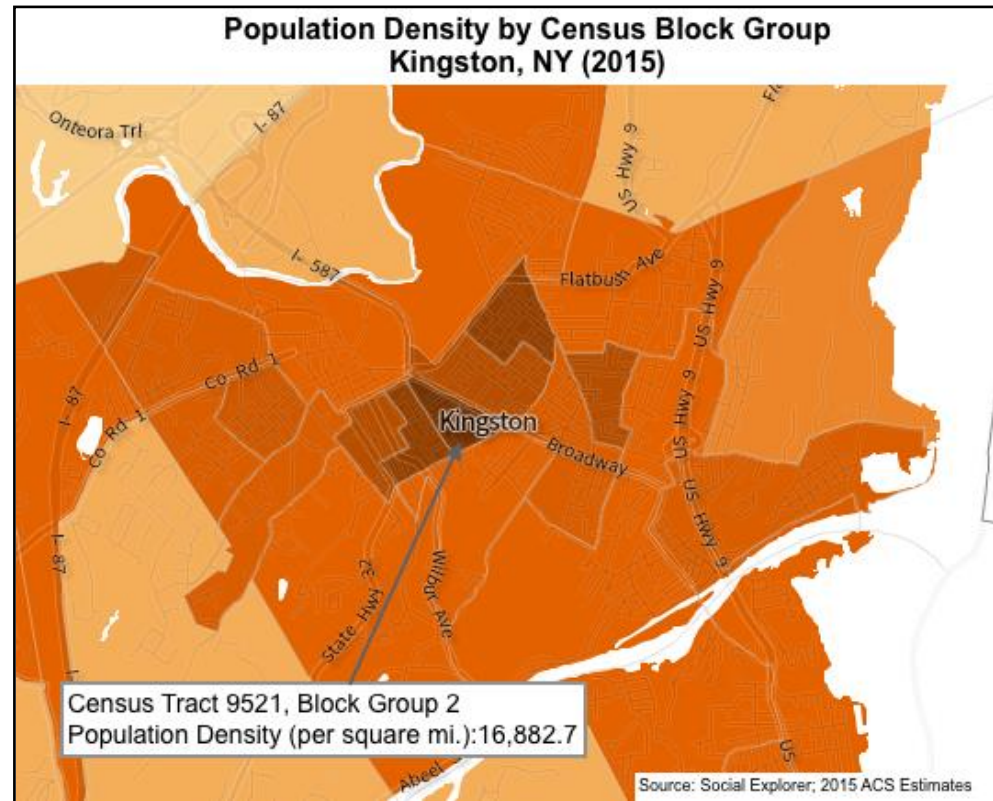
The remnants of major shifts in the global economy were felt in Kingston with the closure of the IBM facilities in nearby Lake Katrine in the mid-1990s. Ripple effects from the loss of 7,000 jobs continued for decades, with many interdependent businesses in the IBM supply chain feeling the effects. The recovery from the Great Recession of 2008 has seen a shift to local economic development policies that support smaller businesses akin to those seeking lower overhead, access to clusters of related and supportive businesses, and a demographic shift to small business founders who seek out urban, “walkable” settings like Kingston.

## PRESENT: Midtown Today

### Demographics<sup>7</sup>

The City of Kingston is a small city in the Mid-Hudson Valley home to 23,625 people. Midtown Kingston's neighborhoods are home to 27% of Kingston's population (6,430 residents) and 23% of the city's households (2,367). The census tracts comprising Midtown have the highest population density compared with other neighborhoods in Kingston, as shown on the map to the right. Since 2010, there has been a slight population decline of 2.97% in Midtown Kingston.

Approximately 10% of Midtown's population are senior citizens (65+ years old), and 26% of the population are children (ages 18 and under). Midtown has a significant proportion of residents that have not completed high school, accounting for nearly 20% of the population. 42% of residents have received a high school diploma, GED, or alternative credit as their highest level of education, and 39% of residents have pursued higher



<sup>7</sup> All demographic data is from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey (5-year estimates). Data for Midtown has been aggregated to reflect block groups and census tracts comprising the study area. Visit American Fact Finder to view the original data for each block group, census tract, and/or the city.

education and/or received an advanced degree. 16% of Midtown's residents are diagnosed with a disability, which may include vision, hearing, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, and independent living difficulties.<sup>8</sup>

Midtown is home to Kingston's most racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse neighborhoods. Approximately 38% of Midtown's residents identify as a racial minority, with 17% identifying as Black or African American and 23% of residents identifying as Hispanic or Latino. 20% of Midtown's households are Spanish-speaking and 26% of households speak a language other than English, of which 18.5% of these households are limited English-speaking. Limited-English speaking households account for 4.8% of total households in Midtown. The median income of households in Midtown is \$36,324, compared with \$40,757 for the entire City of Kingston. The unemployment rate for Midtown's residents is more than double New York State's unemployment rate at 14%. Census Block Group 3 of Census Tract 9519 is home to the lowest-incomes households in Midtown, with an annual median household income of \$17,000.<sup>9</sup>

The Regional Distress Criteria Statistical Report by the HVRC (2015) identified Kingston as an economically distressed city, citing high unemployment and income distress concentrated in Midtown. An estimated 23.4% of Midtown residents live below the poverty level, which is comparatively higher than the city's poverty rate of 18.6%.<sup>10</sup> Midtown includes two of Ulster County's poorest census tracts (9520 and 9521), where nearly 25% of the population lives below the poverty level, with some block groups reaching as high as 44% and 37%. 39% of Midtown's youth population (under the age of 18) live in poverty.<sup>11</sup> Economic distress extends beyond poverty-level incomes in Midtown, as 38% of households receive Food Stamps or SNAP. Midtown Kingston was designated as a "Potential Environmental Justice Area" based on the 2000 Census Data, which identifies Midtown's neighborhoods as vulnerable to environmental injustices based on its socioeconomic and racial minority composition (Appendix 2; DEC n.d.).

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<sup>8</sup> Data only available at the Census Tract level, which include Census Tracts 9519, 9520, and 9521.

<sup>9</sup> Data collected from the American Community Survey (ACS) provides an estimate of a Census-designated area's boundaries based on a sample of the population, not a full count of the population. Small sample sizes yield larger margin of errors, and caution should be used when drawing conclusions about the data. The ACS estimate for median household income in Census Block Group 3 of Tract 9519 is very low and is drastically different from previous years (where median household income was \$25,739 in 2014 ACS 5-year estimates, and \$34,327 in the 2010 Decennial Census).

<sup>10</sup> According to the U.S. Federal Poverty Guidelines, the 2015 poverty threshold for individuals (1 person in household/family) is \$11,770 and \$24,250 for a family/household of 4. More information about poverty thresholds for different household sizes can be found at <https://aspe.hhs.gov/2015-poverty-guidelines>.

<sup>11</sup> Data only available at the Census Tract level, which include Census Tracts 9519, 9520, and 9521.



## Built and Natural Environment

### Land Use and Zoning

Over the years, Midtown has managed to retain much its traditional neighborhood features, including its working-class residential neighborhoods, storefront retail spaces, and industrial buildings. Broadway, Cornell Street, and Greenkill Avenue are the primary corridors that define Midtown and are lined with a diverse mix of land uses, including residential, civic, commercial, recreational, community services, industrial, and manufacturing. Today, the predominant land use in Midtown is “residential,” comprising 44.6% of Midtown’s total land area (1,378 parcels covering 220.4 acres). The next largest land uses (by land area) are “community services” and “commercial.” Midtown Kingston’s history of heavy industry and manufacturing dates to the mid-nineteenth century, and specific information about the remnants of these operations can be determined through study of the historic land uses of individual sites. More recent industrial land use data is listed on the registry of Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Sites, maintained by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Vacancies and parking lots (collectively called “underutilized spaces” in this report) create “gaps” that disrupt the continuity of streetscapes and cause blight. Within the project study area, there are 104 documented vacant parcels, comprising 5.5% of all parcels and 3.7% (or 18.5 acres) of the total land area.<sup>12</sup> Within Midtown’s three census tracts (9519, 9520, and 9521), 14.3% of all housing units and 6% of all parcels are classified as vacant. Many of the city’s vacant parcels are located along Broadway and Cornell St., two of Kingston’s major corridors. Several properties contain surface parking lots and many disconnected spaces that could be reutilized with proper planning and urban design policies.

There are currently 14 unique zoning districts in Midtown Kingston, largely comprised of residential, business, commercial, and industrial designations.<sup>13</sup> As of 2017, the City of Kingston is in the process of amending its zoning code, which was last updated in 1985. The proposed zoning amendments include a form-based overlay district for Midtown to encourage a mix of land uses, compact and walkable neighborhoods, an active streetscape, and reduce parking lots. It also considers a re-evaluation of the city’s current affordable housing policies and compliance requirements.

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<sup>12</sup> Ulster County’s Real Property Data (2017).

<sup>13</sup> Ulster County Real Property Tax Service Agency (2016); see Appendix 4 for full zoning map

## Parks and Open Space

In 2013, the City of Kingston adopted a *Parks & Recreation Master Plan* (Gilmour Planning 2013) to guide future development of parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities in Kingston. In this report, Midtown was identified as an area lacking parks and active recreational areas, despite being the city's most populated district. Parks and open spaces are valuable assets for urban areas, as they offer many social, health, and environmental benefits. The lack of parks and public spaces signifies potential inequities in access to opportunities for active recreation, exercise, and in the public provision of resources. The primary parks and playgrounds (public and private) within Midtown Kingston are Van Buren Playground, YMCA Playground, Kingston High School's tennis courts, and Metro Park.<sup>14</sup> Additional outdoor open spaces in Midtown that provide more passive forms of recreation (e.g. walking and picnicking) include Academy Green Park, Wiltwyck Cemetery, St. Mary's Cemetery, and the Sharpe Burial Ground. Access to the city's more popular and larger parks, such as Forsyth Park and Nature Center (approximately 1 to 2.5 miles from Midtown) or Kingston Point Rotary Park (1 to 3.5 miles from Midtown), may require access to public transportation, a car, or a bike. The development of the Kingston Greenline by the Kingston Land Trust and the City of Kingston are intended to connect and increase access to the city's parks, as discussed later in this report.

## Physical Neighborhood Conditions

Results from two surveys of block and street conditions in 2013 and 2016 suggest that the physical conditions of Midtown's neighborhoods have improved.<sup>15</sup> In 2013 (Phase 1), 61% of Midtown's blocks were rated as "attractive" and 39% were rated as "unattractive." In 2016 (Phase 2), 70% of Midtown's blocks were rated as "attractive" and 30% were rated as "unattractive." Improvements were also observed for street lighting and a reduction in street trash, debris, and litter. Between the two phases, the overall conditions improved for 58% of blocks, stayed the same for 27% of blocks, and became worse for 15% of blocks.

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<sup>14</sup> A complete list of parks and open spaces from Kingston's *Parks & Recreation Master Plan* is included in the Appendix 3.

<sup>15</sup> In 2016, RUPCO, the City of Kingston, Family of Woodstock, Midtown Rising, and Hone Strategic supported a collaborative effort to administer the NeighborWorks America's Community Impact Measures Survey, which was used to survey Midtown's residents on their experiences living in the neighborhood and assess the block and housing conditions of Midtown's neighborhoods (RUPCO 2016). The study area for this survey covered Midtown's northern-most neighborhoods between Clinton, Foxhall, Albany, and Greenkill Avenues and Cornell St. RUPCO administered the same survey in 2013.

## Housing, Building Stock, and Real Estate

Midtown is home to 1,876 parcels that include a unique variety of buildings, from residential homes to industrial warehouses, spanning nearly three and a half centuries of architectural styles. The following table and sections summarize key characteristics of Midtown's building stock (data provided by Ulster County Real Property Tax Service Agency's Tax Parcel dataset (dated 10/2016)).<sup>16</sup>

Total parcels in Midtown	<b>1,876</b>	Average Square Foot of Living Area (residential)	<b>1,720 sq. ft.</b>
Average year built of structures (n=1,380)	<b>1909</b>	Median Square Foot of Living Area (residential)	<b>1,595 sq. ft.</b>
Median year built of structures (n=1,380)	<b>1906</b>	Maximum Square Foot of Living Area (residential)	<b>4,962 sq. ft.</b>
Oldest structure	<b>1679</b> (164 Prospect St.)	Maximum Square Foot of Living Area (residential)	<b>515 sq. ft.</b>

According to the Ulster County Real Property Tax Service Agency's Tax Parcel dataset (2016), the majority (90%) of Midtown's residential homes are in "normal" condition, which indicates that the structure has signs of "normal 'wear and tear'" and few signs of deterioration.<sup>17</sup> A separate survey of housing conditions in 2016 found that nearly half of buildings in Midtown are in good condition, with no apparent need for maintenance and repair.<sup>18</sup> 41% of buildings were reported in need of some repair, and 9% require comprehensive renovation. About three-quarters (72%) of buildings surveyed were found to be very or somewhat attractive, suggesting that Midtown's overall building stock is visually appealing, in sound condition, and consistent with neighborhood character. About a quarter of buildings (27%) were found to be somewhat or very unattractive, which was primarily characterized by

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<sup>16</sup> The Tax Parcel dataset is incomplete; see "n" value for total count each category.

<sup>17</sup> All quotations in this section are from the New York State Office of Real Property Services Assessor's Manual, which can be found at: [https://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/publications/orpts/manuals/rfv\\_manual\\_published.pdf](https://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/publications/orpts/manuals/rfv_manual_published.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> NeighborWorks America's Community Impact Measures Survey (CIMS), conducted by RUPCO, the City of Kingston, Family of Woodstock, Midtown Rising, and Hone Strategic LLC in 2016 (see Appendix 8 for CIMS study area boundary)

buildings experiencing deterioration or vacancy/abandonment. A comparison with data from 2013 revealed that the overall attractiveness of buildings improved for 26% of buildings, stayed the same for 42% of buildings, and worsened for 33% of buildings. The variances between the tax assessor's building condition survey and the CIM survey are likely due to differences in the study area boundaries, year of evaluation, methods of evaluation, and subjectivity of the evaluator.

### **Real Estate, Affordability, and Gentrification**

In 2015, the median value of homes across Midtown's neighborhoods ranged from \$125,600 to \$169,200, with an overall median value of \$147,400. Compared with the City of Kingston's median value of occupied residential units in 2015 (\$171,500), home values in Midtown are valued at \$24,100 lower. Median gross rent for renter-occupied units ranged from \$841 to \$1,100 in Midtown, with an overall median monthly rent of \$970.50, which is lower than the city's median gross rent of \$1,005 per month.

While Midtown is currently an affordable place to live, heightened real estate speculation and skyrocketing market rates in nearby Uptown and the Rondout districts indicate that Kingston's market is quickly heating up. In a 2016 article by Hudson Valley One, the City of Kingston's Tax Assessor, Dan Baker, revealed that Kingston's diverse stock of commercial properties are attracting the attention of potential investors looking for buildings with mixed-use potential.<sup>19</sup> Midtown's real estate values have potential to increase as well with the emergence of a growing arts district and new awareness of its development potential and current affordability. Furthermore, shifts in consumer preference suggest that many individuals are opting to live in urban neighborhoods that offer a range of housing choices and are within walking distance to essential and recreational amenities. Midtown's traditional neighborhood design and proximity to many of Kingston's major civic and cultural anchor institutions (e.g. the Kingston Library, Hospital, the City of Kingston, Kingston High School, the YMCA, and UPAC), as well as diverse eateries and shops, make it a place ripe for new investment and growth.

As the region's small cities experience renewed investment, the likelihood for displacement increases. A 2016 report on gentrification by Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress identified Kingston as 1 of 4 cities showing development pressures. Since 2000, the median home value is up 97.8% (\$86,700 to \$171,500) and median gross rent is up 74.5% (\$576 to \$1,005). While the number of homeowners

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<sup>19</sup> (Sveikauskas 2016)

and renters is about even, HUD data show that 53.2% of renters in Kingston are living in unaffordable housing (paying greater than 30% of income in rent), of which 29.3% are severely cost burdened (greater than 50% of income in rent). Homeowners are also struggling, as 37% pay 30% to 50% of their income toward housing, and 16.8% are severely cost burdened.<sup>20</sup>

## Economic Trends and Employment

### Regional Context

Private sector job creation and employment in the Hudson Valley has been steadily increasing over the past few years, which experienced 1.8% job growth from 2016 to 2017.<sup>21</sup> Among the region's highest job creation industries include educational and health services; professional and business services; trade, transportation, and utilities; and leisure and hospitality. Job growth has been steady in Ulster County (also referred to as the Kingston Metropolitan Statistical Area), with private sector growth of 1.7% percent in 2015 and 3.3% in 2016.<sup>22</sup> According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2014), Ulster County ranks #1 for startup job creation share in the Northeast and 13th in the nation, with 3.9% of Kingston's job creation share coming from start-ups (U.S. Census Bureau 2016).

### Midtown Jobs and Employers

As of 2014, there are a total 3,745 jobs in the Midtown project area. 93% of Midtown's total jobs are filled by workers that live outside of Midtown, while the remaining 7% of jobs are held by residents of the project area. 2,289 workers that live in Midtown are employed outside of the Midtown district boundary. Midtown has a net job inflow (+) of 1,202, which is represented in the figure on the next page from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Fifty percent of workers in Midtown work in the Health and Social Assistance industry, which is largely attributed to the presence of the city's major health care facilities: the Health Alliance Hospitals at Broadway and St. Mary's Avenue, the Kingston Medical Arts

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<sup>20</sup> (Pattern for Progress 2016)

<sup>21</sup> (Department of Labor 2017)

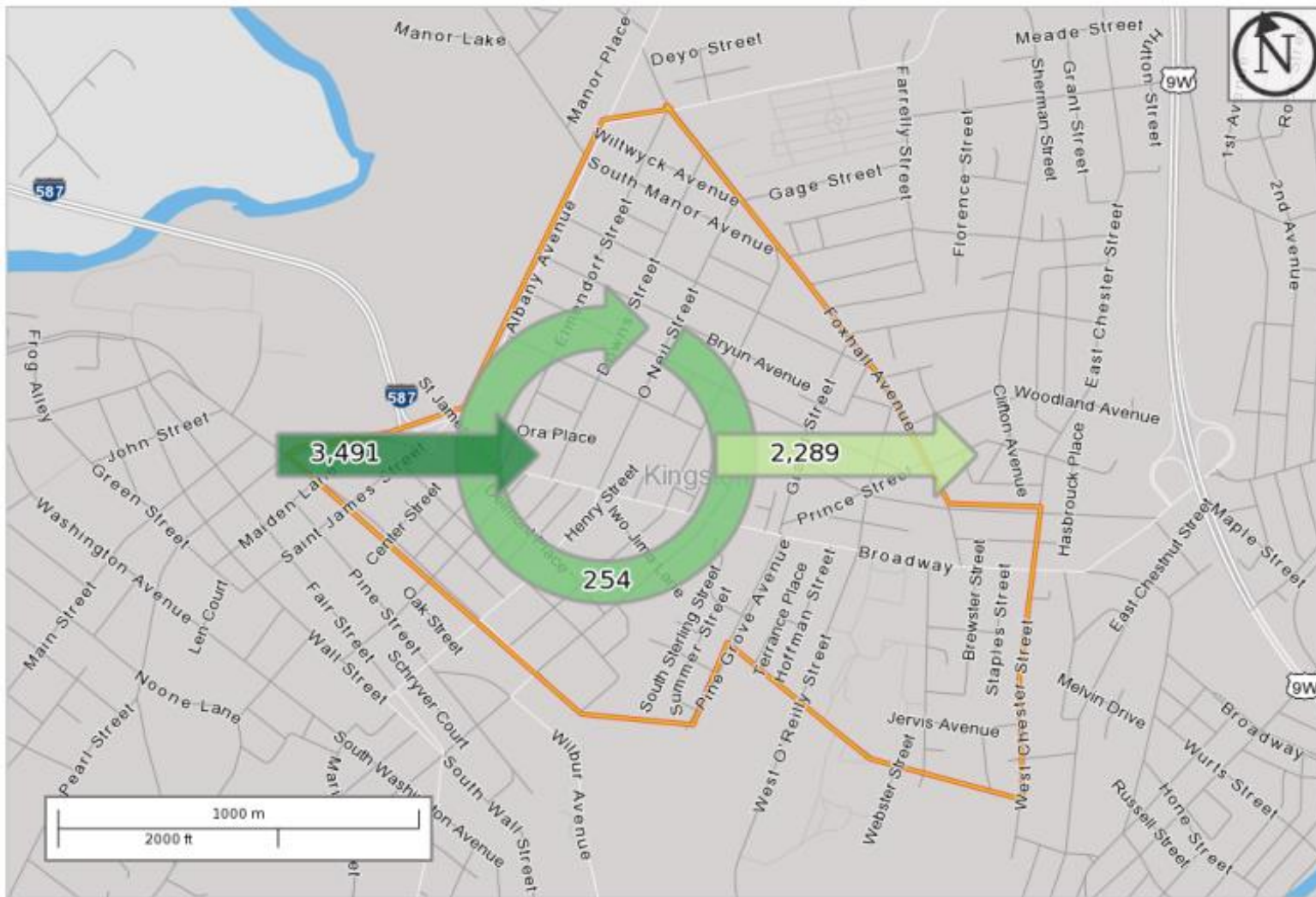
<sup>22</sup> (Doxsey 2017)

Building on Broadway, the medical offices on Grand Street, and the ARC of Ulster-Greene.<sup>23</sup> Midtown's second largest industry by employment is Public Administration due to the presence of the City of Kingston offices, Ulster County offices, and the NYC Department of Environmental Protection. Other large employers include Kingston High School, the SUNY Ulster Kingston Center, the YMCA, and Ulster Performing Arts Center (UPAC).<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> (OntheMap, U.S. Census Bureau 2014)

<sup>24</sup> (Midtown DRI 2016 application)



### *Inflow/Outflow Counts of All Jobs for Selection Area in 2014 (All Workers)*

Created by the U.S. Census Bureau's OnTheMap <http://onthemap.ces.census.gov> on 07/19/2017; Note: Overlay arrows do not indicate directionality of worker flow between home and employment locations.

## Community Services

### Education

The Kingston City School District (KCSD) serves 6,168 students attending public and charter schools in grades Kindergarten through 12 (NYSED 2015-2016). The KCSD maintains 10 schools occupying 17 buildings on 171 acres, with over 1.3 million square feet of educational space.<sup>25</sup> It employs approximately 1,114 teachers and staff.<sup>26</sup> The major public schools serving Midtown's youth include George Washington School (PK-4), Bailey Middle School (5-8), and Kingston High School (9-12). Kingston High School's June 2016 graduation rate was 84.16%. According to U.S. News and World Reports for the 2014-2015 school year, 75% of Kingston High School's student body are proficient in English and 73% are proficient in Mathematics.

A new universal Pre-K program is planned for the old Meagher School building to promote accessible education opportunities for Kingston's toddlers. Private schools located within and adjacent to Midtown include Fair Street Nursery School (Pre-K), Good Shepherd Christian School (Pre-K through 8), and Kingston Catholic School (Pre-K through 8). Many daycare centers are also located in Midtown, including the YMCA of Kingston and Ulster County, Kingston Cares, the YWCA, and Mi Casita Daycare. In August 2015, SUNY Ulster County Community College, located 10 miles away in Stone Ridge, expanded to create a satellite campus in Kingston in the former Sophie Finn School building to promote access to higher education for Kingston's youth and adults. This campus hosts a variety of workforce training programs and courses, including a Police Academy Program, general education, a high school equivalency program, and a Computer Learning Center. SUNY Ulster partners with Kingston High School to provide an Early College Program for high-achieving high school and home-schooled students.<sup>27</sup>

Kingston's student population is increasingly becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. In the 2015-2016 school year, 57% of students identified as Caucasian, 14% as African American or Black, 19% as Hispanic or Latino, and 9% as an "other" race and

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<sup>25</sup> (KCSD 2017).

<sup>26</sup> (KCSD 2017)

<sup>27</sup> (SUNY Ulster 2017)



multiracial.<sup>28</sup> The District also serves many students with disabilities, suggesting that additional resources may be needed for accommodations. According to the NYS Education Department (2015-2016), 24% of students (1,464) in the KCSD have a disability, compared to the national average of 13%.<sup>29</sup>

Increased child poverty is a growing issue in Kingston's schools. 60% of students in the KCSD are considered "economically disadvantaged," and receive free lunch through the KCSD.<sup>30</sup> Based on higher percentages of students living in poverty, all students attending Chambers, Edson, John F. Kennedy and George Washington Elementary Schools are eligible to receive free lunches.

## **Transportation**

77.9% of Midtown's residents (workers ages 16+ years) commute to work by car, truck, or van. In 2014, approximately 22,200 vehicles were estimated to travel on Broadway each day, making Broadway Midtown's primary and busiest transportation corridor. Some residents commute to work via alternative forms of transportation: 1.7% take public transportation, 2.5% bike, and 13.7% walk to work. Midtown has very walkable neighborhoods with access to multiple public transportation options, including bus and trolley. Citibus, Kingston's public bus system, has 3 routes that serve Kingston (A, B, and C), and all make stops in different areas of Midtown. All routes run on weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., and Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (excluding most holidays). The City of Kingston also offers a Paratransit service offers transportation for senior citizens and individuals with disabilities and complies with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessibility standards (City of Kingston 2017). The paratransit service runs Monday through Friday from 6:30 am - 7:30 pm, and Saturdays from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm.

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<sup>28</sup> (NYSED 2015-2016)

<sup>29</sup> A student is identified as having a disability if they "have been identified as such by the Committee on Special Education and are receiving services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Students with disabilities include those having an intellectual disability; hearing impairment, including deafness; speech or language impairment; visual impairment, including blindness; serious emotional disturbance; orthopedic impairment; autism; traumatic brain injury; developmental delay; other health impairment; specific learning disability; deaf-blindness; or multiple disabilities and who, by reason thereof, receive special education and related services under the IDEA according to an Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), or a services plan" (NYSED 2017).

<sup>30</sup> "Economically disadvantaged" students are those with families that participate in: "economic assistance programs, such as the free or reduced-price lunch programs, Social Security Insurance (SSI), Food Stamps, Foster Care, Refugee Assistance (cash or medical assistance), Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Safety Net Assistance (SNA), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), or Family Assistance: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

The plan to create the Kingston Greenline aims to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access in Midtown, where trails and lanes will converge to connect Kingston's three business districts together.

## **Public Safety**

Crime and public safety are key indicators of quality of life and should be further analyzed and explored for this area of Kingston. While data on crime specifically in Midtown is not currently available on an aggregated level, overall crime in Kingston has steadily decreased over the past decade. The implementation of a Community Oriented Policing (COP) Program has been successful in reporting and preventing crimes and violent activities.<sup>31</sup>

The 2016 NeighborWorks Community Impact Measures Survey asked Midtown residents about their experiences living in the neighborhood. Overall most residents (98%) said they felt safe in their neighborhood during day. 82% of residents felt safe walking alone at night in their neighborhood, signifying that they perceived their neighborhood to be less safe at night than during the day. Regardless of whether the level of safety is real or perceived, these data provide insights into how residents feel and the quality of life in their neighborhood.

## **Recent Projects and Developments**

Kingston's Midtown neighborhoods have seen a myriad of renewed investment and development activities over the past decade. Many of these projects have focused on the development of the creative economy and provision of affordable, quality housing. This section highlights major developments in the past decade that have significantly shaped Midtown and continue to serve the community at large.

The rehabilitation of theater venues is a often a harbinger of renewed investment in core urban areas. The efforts of the **Ulster Performing Arts Center (UPAC)** to bolster reinvestment in Midtown began in the late 1970s, with a decades-long effort to restore

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<sup>31</sup> <http://www.dailyfreeman.com/general-news/20170213/reports-of-serious-crime-decline-in-kingston-though-violent-crimes-rise-slightly>

the 1510-seat proscenium theater -- the largest between New York City and Albany. Operated by the Poughkeepsie-based Bardavon Theater since 2007, UPAC began a capital campaign for infrastructure upgrades to include new HVAC that finally allow the venue to keep its doors open year-round. This is a significant boon to Midtown's economy.

The opening of **721 Media Center** in 2008, a 30,000 square foot collaborative creative space for media-related businesses, recognized the demand for flexible office space by small and "micro" businesses. Branded as a media center, it attracted several related businesses in the media arts, demonstrating the presence of a growing cluster of creative businesses in Kingston.

In July 2015, RUPCO opened the **Lace Mill**, a formerly vacant lace curtain mill that was converted into a residential and studio building for artists. Located at 165 Cornell Street in Kingston, the Lace Mill includes 55 residential units ranging from 1 to 3 bedrooms and artist studio spaces.<sup>32</sup> RUPCO received a total of \$2.9 million in NYS Historic Preservation Tax Credits to redevelop the building. The Lace Mill is now an iconic site in Midtown that transformed the Cornell Street corridor and set an example for future adaptive reuse projects in Kingston.<sup>33</sup>

## Arts District Development

One of the most transformative projects in Midtown has been the establishment of the Kingston Midtown Arts District, which seeks to drive new community investment and revitalization through bringing "a unifying focus and pride to the neighborhood by fostering greater communication between the business and residential neighborhoods, become a magnet for tourism and investment, and help to unite Kingston into one long thriving community from Uptown to Kingston Point."<sup>34</sup> Despite the cultural and creative activity occurring in all corners of the city, Midtown has been recognized as "ripe" for the establishment of an arts district for its performing arts venues, artist housing and studio spaces, art and media-based businesses, arts education opportunities, commercial corridor potential, and linkages to festivals events as a central area of the city.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> RUPCO, "The Lace Mill," accessed October 30, 2016.

<sup>33</sup> NYS Homes and Community Renewal, "Conversion of Kingston Lace Factory to Artists' Affordable Housing Begins," February 6, 2014.

<sup>34</sup> <https://madkingston.org/about/>

<sup>35</sup> From the Report on THE ARTS DISTRICT GENERAL MEETING, May 9, 2015, Common Council Chambers, City Hall. Retrieved from [https://kingston-ny.gov/filestorage/8463/8511/8682/12409/Arts\\_District\\_Meeting\\_Report-05-09-2015.pdf](https://kingston-ny.gov/filestorage/8463/8511/8682/12409/Arts_District_Meeting_Report-05-09-2015.pdf)

The **Kingston Midtown Arts District** ("KMAD") officially launched in late 2016 as a project to highlight and support the growing arts community and creative businesses in Midtown. The boundary includes all arts-related enterprises along Broadway from Albany Ave. to Foxhall Ave., and Cornell Street and Greenkill Avenue. KMAD has brought new attention to the importance of the arts in Midtown and has been an important force in attracting new creative sector businesses and entrepreneurs.

On the corner of Broadway and O'Neil Street is the **Broadmoor Building**, which includes 6 storefronts featuring local art-based businesses and organizations. Some of its anchor tenants include the Pop-Up Gallery Group ("PUGG") and the Department of Regional Art Works ("D.R.A.W. Kingston"). The building also includes 21 newly renovated apartments.

### **In Progress**

The **ARC of Ulster-Greene** is a non-profit organization that provides programs and services to individuals with disabilities. In 2016, the ARC was awarded a \$200,000 grant to rehabilitate 139 Cornell Street into a mixed-use facility to support local artists and start-up businesses, which will open in 2019.

In September 2018, RUPCO broke ground on the **Energy Square** development at 20 Cedar Street, the location of the former MidCity Lanes bowling alley. It will include a mixed-income 57-unit housing complex that will also include spaces for **Hudson Valley Tech Meetup** and the **Center for Creative Education**, which will move from its nearby Midtown location where it has been offering arts, wellness, and cultural programming aimed at supporting underserved youth for over a decade.

RUPCO's proposed **Stockade Works Project** will rehabilitate the old Metro Life building, a defunct 70,000 square foot factory located on Greenkill Ave. to create a film and TV production and post-production studio, a training center, and a maker's space for entrepreneurs. Spearheaded by Mary Stuart Masterson, this project is intended to attract large-scale projects and connect local workers with employment and training opportunities.

The nearly completed **Kingston Greenline**, a proposed network of trails, sidewalks, complete streets, linear parks, and bikeways, will span through Midtown Kingston to connect the city the Kingston Point Rail Trail and other county trail systems. This project is spearheaded by the Kingston Land Trust and will be a critical component in creating active recreation opportunities in Midtown and connecting the emerging Midtown arts district with the rest of the city.

**Broadway Commons** is a city-owned parcel that was formerly the location of the Kings Inn Motel next to UPAC. Since the demolition of the motel in 2011 due to poor conditions and numerous violations, the parcel has been used as a space for community events and gatherings. Proposals are on the drawing board to transform the site into a public green space and to continue use as a site for private events by Spiegeltent Productions.

## **FUTURE: Visions of Midtown**

The shortcomings of global economic trends and neoliberal economic growth paradigms that guided Kingston's IBM era indicate that a different set of assumptions is needed to guide economic development strategies. Today's economy, often referred to as the "New Economy," is knowledge-dependent, global in scale, entrepreneurial, and rooted in information and informational technologies.<sup>36</sup> As economic trends and networks continue to shift and expand, there is an ever-growing need to pursue development strategies that seek social equity, environmental sustainability, and strengthen local economies. Kingston, and more specifically Midtown Kingston, is well-positioned to pursue this new economic development paradigm.

The city's rich natural resources, wealth of human talent, strong social infrastructure, breadth and depth of higher education, diversity, and vibrant neighborhoods add to its strengths as a place where people want to live, work, and play. Over the years, this district's thriving creative and cultural industries have emerged from its history and identity built on innovation and creativity. Among the numerous changes taking place include the development many new live-work lofts; a Complete Streets project along Broadway; a rail trail network and hub; a 100-unit senior development; an initiative to designate it as an arts district; and several proposed or envisioned projects and plans for buildings and enterprises now in progress. The confluence of these projects and developments have evolved from a myriad of previous studies, plans, and grassroots efforts that seek to lay out future visions for Midtown. This section provides an overview of these initiatives and how they fit into and inform broader development goals for Midtown and the City of Kingston.

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<sup>36</sup> Leigh, N.G. and Blakely, E.J. (2013). Planning for economic development: theory and practice. 5th edition. Los Angeles: Sage.

## Civic Engagement and Grassroots Efforts

Civic engagement has grown dramatically in Midtown Kingston over the past decade. Direct engagement and citizen input are important for shaping future visions for community and economic development in Midtown Kingston. In every area of planning and policy work, the City of Kingston administration has increased outreach and engaged with the grassroots community. For example, in preparation for applying for the **NYS Downtown Revitalization Initiative (“DRI”)** grant proposal for the Midtown area in 2016, the city convened 37 active and engaged leaders in the community and collected input from additional community members via an online survey and email. Many groups have become increasingly engaged in Midtown’s planning process, including the Kingston Midtown Arts District, Midtown Rising, Kingston Citizens, the Business Alliance of Kingston, the Center for Creative Education, the Kingston Land Trust, and other local businesses, organizations, and residents.

## Plans, Visions, and Proposed Projects

Kingston’s comprehensive plan, **Kingston 2025**, outlines a vision for the future development of the city, and states that “Historic and cultural resources of the City must be strongly protected and leveraged to the maximum extent to attract residents, businesses and tourism thereby creating and promoting economic development;” as one of its core principles. The Midtown Core Area (Chapter 8) plan suggests opportunities for transforming Midtown for culture & entertainment center yet lacks a cohesive body of goals and objectives to achieve this. Furthermore, the comprehensive plan frames cultural development primarily within the context of economic development activity, and not as a ground-up mechanism for community development. Cultural capital is often viewed as something controlled or consumed by high income households or visitors.<sup>37</sup> As Kingston becomes a magnet for creative enterprises, non-profit arts organizations, and increased visitation, there is a greater need to ensure that the development process is accessible, affordable, and inclusive. The pursuit of the vision for Midtown as a creative and cultural hub must also include a clear strategy to avoid displacement and gentrification.

## Building a Better Broadway /Broadway Streetscape Project

Building a Better Broadway, a project initiated with support from Ulster County in 2015, provided a strategy for renovating the

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<sup>37</sup> Green, G.P. and Haines, A. (2008). Asset building and community development. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

physical layout of Broadway (the “spine” of Midtown) and connecting streets to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, aesthetics, and traffic flow. The Broadway Streetscape Project proposes streetscape improvements along Broadway (Midtown’s “spine”) to beautify the corridor and improve inter-modal transportation choice and accessibility. It proposes upgrades and a Complete Street renovation of the Broadway corridor in Midtown Kingston. This multi-phase project will include the construction of complete street features: rehabilitation of sidewalks, installation of bike lanes, new traffic lane patterns, enhanced curb strips, and green infrastructure improvements, including porous pavers, bioretention and stormwater street trees.

### **Equitable Development Planning**

In March of 2016, the US EPA conducted a Building Blocks workshop in which we engaged a broad cross-section of Midtown stakeholders to envision “Next Steps” for this proposed Equitable Development Plan. The City’s recent work with the US EPA to initiate an equitable development planning process brought in a large cross-section of the community, where at public meetings they engaged with public officials, private citizens, community organizations, and outside agencies. The Kingston community convened in May 2017 for several events, including: a site tour with City of Kingston staff, officials, citizens, representatives of community groups, and federal agency staff; a public community meeting; and a technical workshop with interested community members and key stakeholders. The city plans to continue these dialogues with the community and build upon stakeholders’ recommendations for equitable development opportunities.

Creating connections between all these initiatives into a cohesive vision for Midtown; identifying and describing assets as a basis for this work. Using cultural asset maps as tools for unlocking leverage points for placemaking and strengthening Midtown’s community architecture

## CULTURAL ASSET MAPPING

Culture is defined as a "complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by [a human] as a member of society." Creating an inventory and map of a community's cultural assets can serve as a useful tool for better understanding a community's culture in the context of its history, current conditions, and recommendations for future development. Cultural asset (or resource) mapping is identified as "a process of collecting, recording, analyzing and synthesizing information in order to describe the cultural resources, networks, links and patterns of usage of a given community or group" (Artscape, Toronto). This work is based on concepts of "community asset mapping," which is a community development model that identifies and builds upon the "gifts, skills, and capacities" of "individuals, associations and institutions" in a community.<sup>38</sup> The primary goal of creating a cultural asset map is to inform strategies to engage and build upon the cultural assets and resources embedded within a community. While communities often pursue "needs" assessments which focus on deficiencies and deficits, asset maps and assessments provide a unique alternative to identify and build upon capacities and strengths.

Contrasting the 'Needs' versus 'Assets' Approach to Community Enhancement	
Needs	Assets
Focuses on deficiencies	Focuses on effectiveness
Results in fragmentation of response to local needs	Builds interdependencies
Makes people consumer of services; builds dependence	Identifies way that people can give of their talents
Residents have little voice in deciding how to address local concerns	Seeks to empower people

From *Mapping the Assets of Your Community: A Key component for Building Local Capacity* by Lionel J. Beaulieu,, Southern Rural Development Center.

<sup>38</sup> Green, G.P. and Haines, A. (2008). Asset building and community development. Second edition. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.



This approach promotes community engagement and involvement, local control and knowledge, and presents new opportunities. How might the outcomes of a needs analysis differ from that of an assets analysis? The results of creating a community or cultural assets inventory and map can provide community with the tools and data to pursue cultural district planning; identify hubs, linkages, networks; increase knowledge and appreciation for what currently exists; identify gaps; gain new perspectives; and inform future community planning initiatives.<sup>39</sup>

Community asset maps are not always just a physical map (although maps are a useful element) but can also be represented as an inventory and analysis of assets. An analysis of community assets should consider the locations of assets and level of community control to determine the accessibility. Assets that are located within and controlled within a neighborhood, such as neighborhood associations or cultural organizations, tend to be the most accessible. Assets located and controlled outside of the neighborhood, such as welfare expenditures in low-income neighborhoods (controlled by government agencies which foster dependencies, versus creating opportunities for community-level interventions), tend to be the least effective. This model can also be applied as a method for inventorying and analyzing a community's cultural assets to inform community and economic development initiatives.

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<sup>39</sup> Cultural Mapping Toolkit, 2010 Legacies Now & Creative City Network Of Canada

## Cultural Resources Framework

This report utilizes the Cultural Resources Framework developed by Millier Dickenson Blais, which provides a systematic approach for categorizing a community's cultural assets. The dots indicate the colors used to identify the assets on the maps in this report.

CULTURAL RESOURCES FRAMEWORK	
● <b>Cultural Heritage</b>	Buildings, historic sites, monuments, historic districts, public arts, etc.
● <b>Natural Heritage</b>	Parks, open spaces, gardens, conservation areas, farms, etc.
● <b>Spaces &amp; Facilities</b>	Art centers, museums, libraries and archives, theaters, art galleries, etc.
● <b>Community Cultural Organizations</b>	Schools, civic institutions groups, societies, nonprofits, and organizations.
● <b>Creative Cultural Industries</b>	Includes all creative businesses, including film/sound/video/, publishing, art dealers, theater companies, museums and galleries, radio and television broadcasting, architecture, design, interactive digital media, culinary arts, dance, music and instruments, etc.
● <b>Creative Cultural Occupations</b>	Sole proprietors and creative individuals, including architects, designers, writers, performing artists, visual artists, artists, cultural managers, etc.
● <b>Community Festivals and Events</b>	Events and festivals with a focus on music, art, and film; seasonal, cultural, or historical events; etc.
<b>Intangible Assets</b>	Stories, customs, place names, oral traditions, etc.

## Methods

### Development of the Cultural Asset Database

We developed a database of Midtown’s cultural assets through a combination of methods, including internet research, stakeholder outreach, and use of existing databases. Using the Cultural Assets Framework, we identified as many assets as possible that met the criteria for these categories. Information collected include the asset name, address, a brief description, and website (if applicable). Once all assets were identified, each resource was categorized into its correlating categories. While many of the assets fit into more than one category, we assigned each asset a primary category that best described the resource. For example, many art galleries are both a “Space & Facility” to show artists’ work and a “Creative Cultural Industry,” serving a purpose as a retail space. Ultimately, we decided that galleries serve the primary function as a place to display artwork. Institutions, such as community service organizations and government agencies, were also mapped as resources that support Midtown’s cultural assets.

### Development of the Cultural Asset Map

All assets were mapped according to their primary cultural asset categories, represented by different colors on the map. Assets that had a mailing address or real location were geocoded. Some assets, such as “intangible assets” or nonprofit organizations did not have a physical location, and therefore are not visually displayed on the maps. The data points were geocoded using Google’s MyMaps tool and were imported into geographic information software (GIS) to produce the static maps.

A web-based interactive map and a series of static maps were created to serve as tools to explore and analyze Midtown’s Cultural Assets. Google MyMaps is published online for users to explore the breadth of Midtown’s assets and determine their location (see link and screenshot in next section). The static maps, described in the following section, are useful for understanding Midtown’s cultural assets within the context of existing community features and socioeconomic trends.

Midtown's cultural assets were overlaid on the following thematic maps to identify connections, gaps, and physical relationships of assets to the built, natural, and socioeconomic environments of Midtown.

- Population Density
- Median Household Income (2015 ACS Estimates)
- Percentage of Households Living Below the Poverty Level
- Assessed Values of Residential and Commercial Properties
- Kingston's Cultural Districts
- Greenline, Open Spaces, and Parks
- Public Transportation and Parking
- Vacant Lots, Parking Lots, and Large Impervious Spaces

### **Map Usage and Interpretation**

The purpose of these maps is not to provide an on-the-ground walking map or guide of cultural resources in Midtown. Rather, our intention is to glean insights into patterns, spatial relationships, clusters, and connections that can inform future planning for Midtown, especially in the development of an arts district. The Google MyMaps version can be used to identify the locations of individual resources on the map, such as specific arts-based businesses or historic sites. We encourage you explore each of these maps and draw your own observations. We have provided an interpretation of each map in the following and conclude the report with recommendations based on our findings.

## **Description of Features**

Each map displays Midtown Kingston's Cultural Assets in relation to a descriptive aspect of Midtown's built, natural, or socio-economic environment. Each asset type (as described in the "Cultural Resources Framework" section), is represented by a dot in various colors. While some assets may be categorized into several different categories, we identified a primary category for each asset based (read more about these decisions in the "Methods" section).

Many assets are located at the same address, and in geocoding these resources we were unable to represent them as a cluster. An example would be the Lace Mill or the Brush Factory, where multiple artists have their residency and studios. We marked these places as "Cultural Hubs," or areas of concentrated cultural or arts-related activity, to signify that there are multiple points at this location. They are noted on the map as stars and are represented different colors to signify the predominant cultural asset type. Other locations with a few assets at one location may not be represented by a star, however, can be viewed on Google MyMaps for more specific information about the resources. Thematic features on each map, from the Kingston Greenline to median household income, are described in more detail on each map and in Section 4.

## MAP ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION



Photo: Bob Haines, c. 1951. *Midtown Kingston, construction of CSX Railroad underpass in progress.*

## Midtown's Cultural Assets

Cultural assets are resources that encompass significant cultural, historic, heritage, creative, or value. This is the first map of its kind in Midtown and the City of Kingston to systematically inventory and classify cultural resources. A database of Midtown's cultural assets was developed through extensive research and community outreach. Assets were then classified into 8 unique typologies, which are listed in the legend above, represented by colored dots (except for the intangible assets, which do not have specific locations; see the full descriptions of each category in the report). The goal of this map is not to provide a directory of businesses and historic sites, but rather provide a visual spatial representation of Midtown's cultural assets. It is intended to serve as a resource for future cultural planning and to inform the development of a detailed asset-based plan that can be adopted by the City of Kingston.

Resources identified outside of the boundaries of Midtown are included if they serve Midtown in some capacity. This list is complete to the best of our knowledge. However, we realize that resources may be missing. A complete list of assets is included in the report appendix and online at [\[LINK to MYMAP\]](#). An up-to-date, interactive map of cultural assets can be found at [\[LINK\]](#).

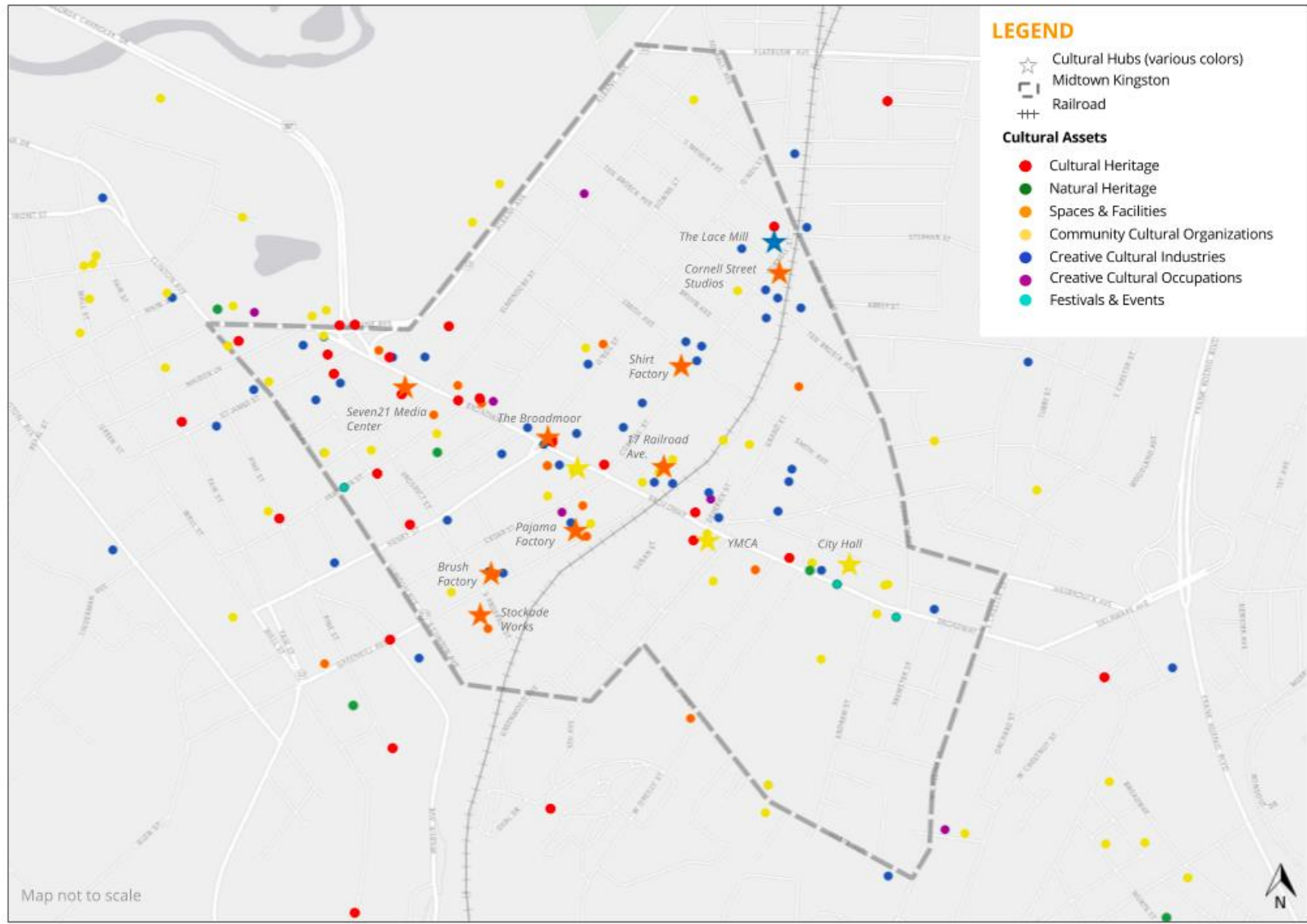
### **Analysis/Observation:**

- Assets are clustered along Broadway, Greenkill, and Cornell
- Increased commercial and industry activity in these areas; potential need to accommodate increased commercial and recreational activities
- Many cultural assets serve Midtown that are located outside of the boundary; raises questions about strengthening linkages and connections
- Numerous creative cultural industries, cultural heritage, and community cultural organizations
- Relatively natural heritage and festivals and events



## MIDTOWN'S CULTURAL ASSETS

Midtown Kingston, New York, 12401





## Population Density

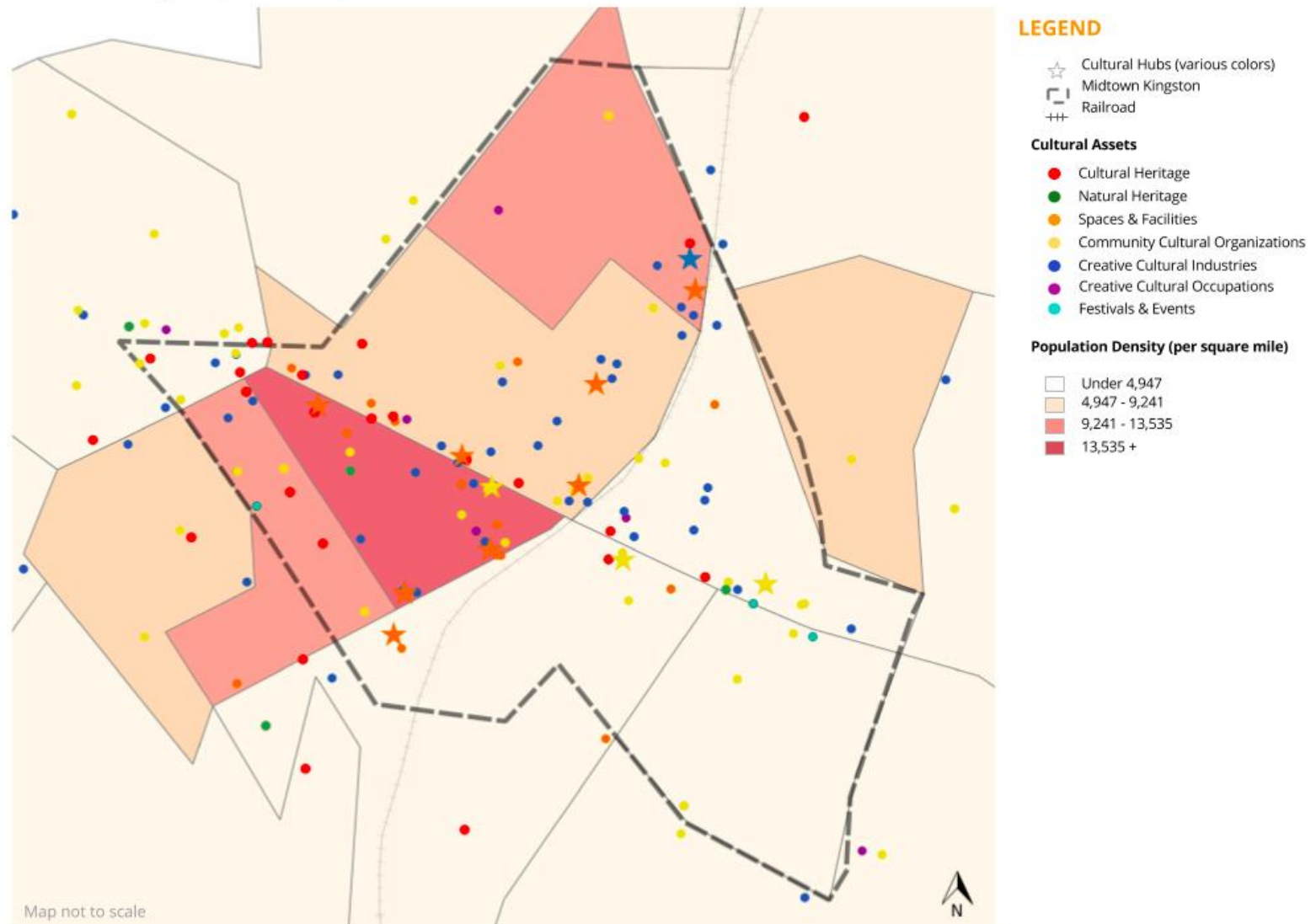
Population density is an analysis used to understand the concentration of people living in each area. Higher population density typically signifies more concentrated areas where residents live on smaller parcels or in apartments (like inner city neighborhoods), and lower density signifies fewer residents living on larger parcels (typical of suburbs or rural areas). This map displays the population density of residents in Midtown Kingston by U.S. Census block group, the smallest geographic unit for U.S. Census demographic surveys. Population density is calculated by dividing the number of people living in each census block group by the area (which in this case is square miles). For example, block group 2 of census tract 9521 (the tract with the darkest shade of pink) has the highest population density, or highest number of residents per square mile compared with other census block groups.

### Analysis/Observation:

- There are more cultural resources in areas of Kingston with higher population density
- Midtown has the highest population density
- Opportunity to develop affordable housing and make sure it stays affordable
- Higher population density and walkable neighborhoods are good for district and commercial/business development
- Opportunity for further engagement and outreach with current residents
- High population density provides incentives for development in this area (business and employment, workforce training, etc.)

## MIDTOWN'S CULTURAL ASSETS IN RELATION TO POPULATION DENSITY

Midtown Kingston, New York, 12401



## Median Household Income

This map displays the median income of households in Midtown Kingston's U.S. Census block groups, the smallest geographic units for U.S. Census demographic surveys. A household is defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as "all the people who occupy a housing unit (such as a house or apartment) as their usual place of residence." The U.S. Census Bureau determines the median income of households in a census block group by dividing the "income distribution into two equal groups, one having incomes above the median, and other having incomes below the median." Thus, the median household income is the "middle" income, with each half of the population having incomes below or above that number.

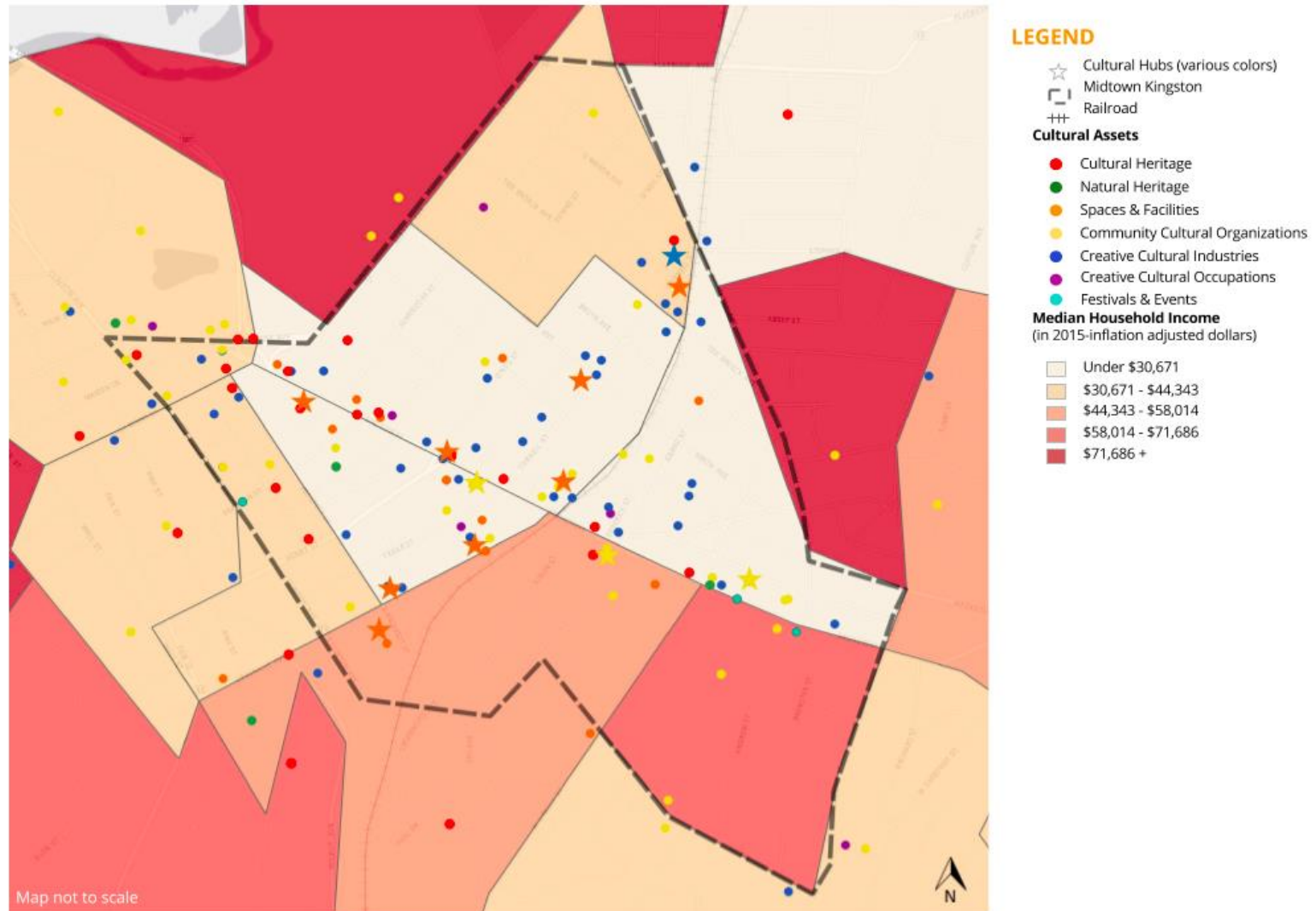
This map shows that most of Midtown's census block groups have lower median household incomes than surrounding block groups, suggesting that more of Midtown's residents live in lower-income households. The median household income for the entire City of Kingston in 2015 was \$40,757.

### **Analysis/ Observation:**

- Midtown's residents live in lower-income households/neighborhoods, suggesting inequity
- Neighborhoods are rich in cultural assets, but not in community wealth; need to bridge the gap
- Potential for gentrification and displacement; lots of desirable aspects and opportunity; lack of community control over resources
- Opportunities exist for workforce development and training, especially in the creative, knowledge, and cultural sectors.

## MIDTOWN'S CULTURAL ASSETS IN RELATION TO MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2015)

Midtown Kingston, New York, 12401



## Poverty

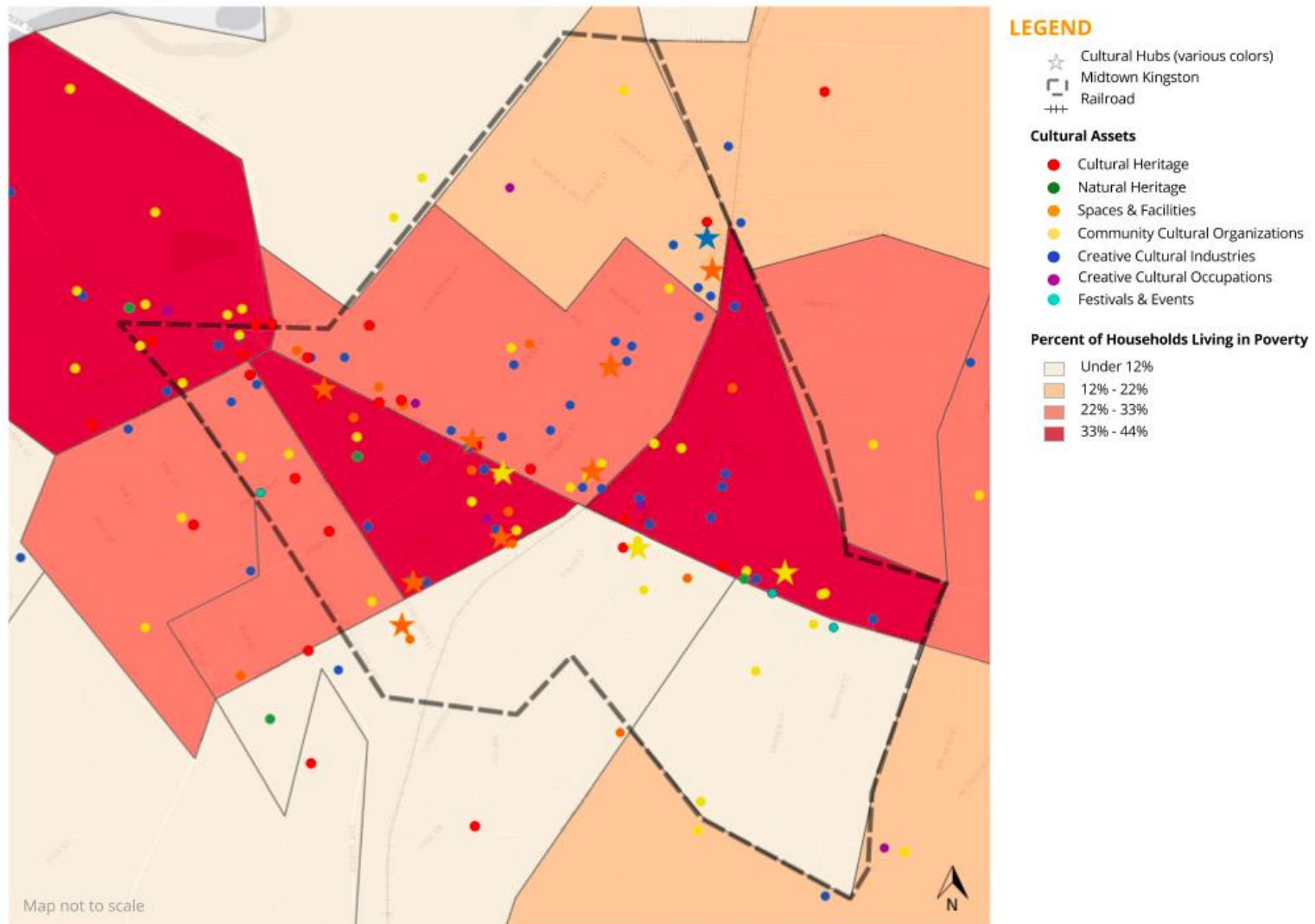
The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey provides estimates for the percentage of households with income thresholds that fall below the poverty line. Household poverty is determined by several factors, including number of household residents and total household income. Thus, there is no single "poverty threshold," and poverty is determined on a case-by-case basis. This map shows an estimate of the percentage of households with incomes below the poverty level for each U.S. Census block group in Midtown. Block groups are the smallest geographic units for U.S. Census demographic surveys. The census blocks signified in the darkest shade of pink have the highest percentage of households living below the poverty level, and the lightest-colored census blocks (cream-colored) have the lowest percentage of poverty.

### **Analysis/Observations:**

- High poverty and inequality in Midtown;
- Access to community resources and organizations
- Explore how cultural assets can better serve those in poverty, especially children and youth populations.
- Cultural development as a mechanism for improving social capital and connections

## MIDTOWN'S CULTURAL ASSETS IN RELATION TO HOUSEHOLD POVERTY (2015)

Midtown Kingston, New York, 12401



### Assessed Residential and Commercial Property Values

This map shows the assessed values of residential and commercial real property in Midtown. The assessed value of a property and its accompanying structures, which is determined by a local tax assessor, is the market value a property would sell for under normal conditions (learn more from the NYS Department of Finance and Taxation at <https://www.tax.ny.gov/pit/property/learn/asmts.htm>). The residential and commercial real property data for Midtown were obtained from the Ulster County Tax Parcel dataset, which is maintained by the County's Real Property Tax Service Agency.

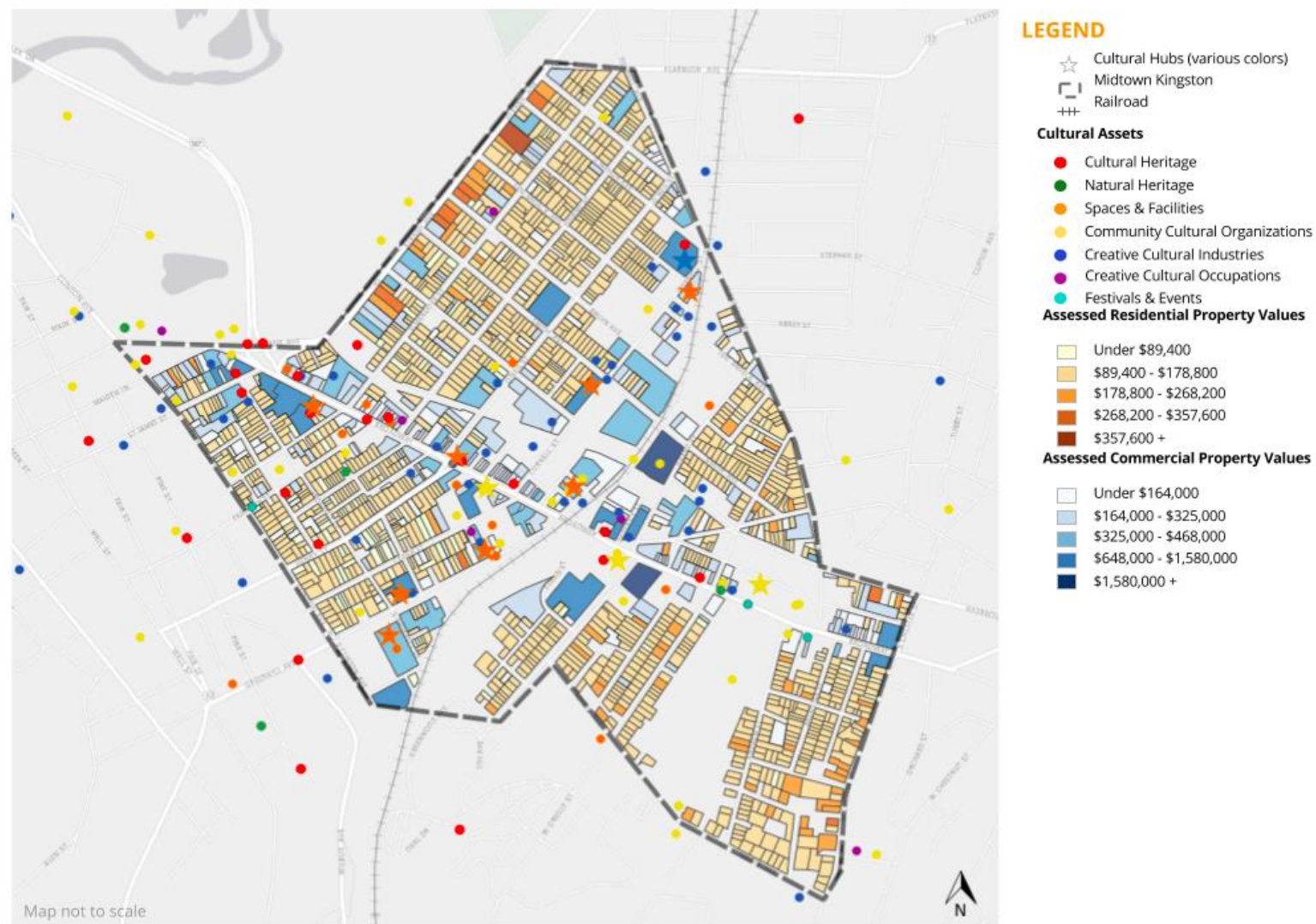
#### **Analysis/ Observation:**

- Relatively low assessed residential and commercial property values in Midtown → is likely why creative based industries and occupations are attracted to the area
- Opportunities for future development, but concern for gentrification and displacement becomes clearer
- Potential for cultural investments to raise property values



## MIDTOWN'S CULTURAL ASSETS IN RELATION TO ASSESSED PROPERTY VALUES

Midtown Kingston, New York, 12401





## Cultural Districts

Kingston has a rich historic and architectural legacy, much of which is marked by officially designated historic districts in Uptown (the Stockade and Fair Street Districts) and Downtown (the Chestnut Street and Rondout-Strand Districts). While Midtown Kingston is notable for its 19th and early 20th century vernacular architecture and former industrial buildings, it is not officially designated as a historic district. Significant cultural heritage resources in Midtown include the Ulster Performing Arts Center (UPAC), the Burger-Matthews House, and Kingston City Hall, all of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Midtown is also home to an emerging arts district, known as the Kingston Midtown Arts District, or KMAD, defined in yellow on the map. This proposed district seeks to put Midtown “on the map” as a regional hub for arts and culture.

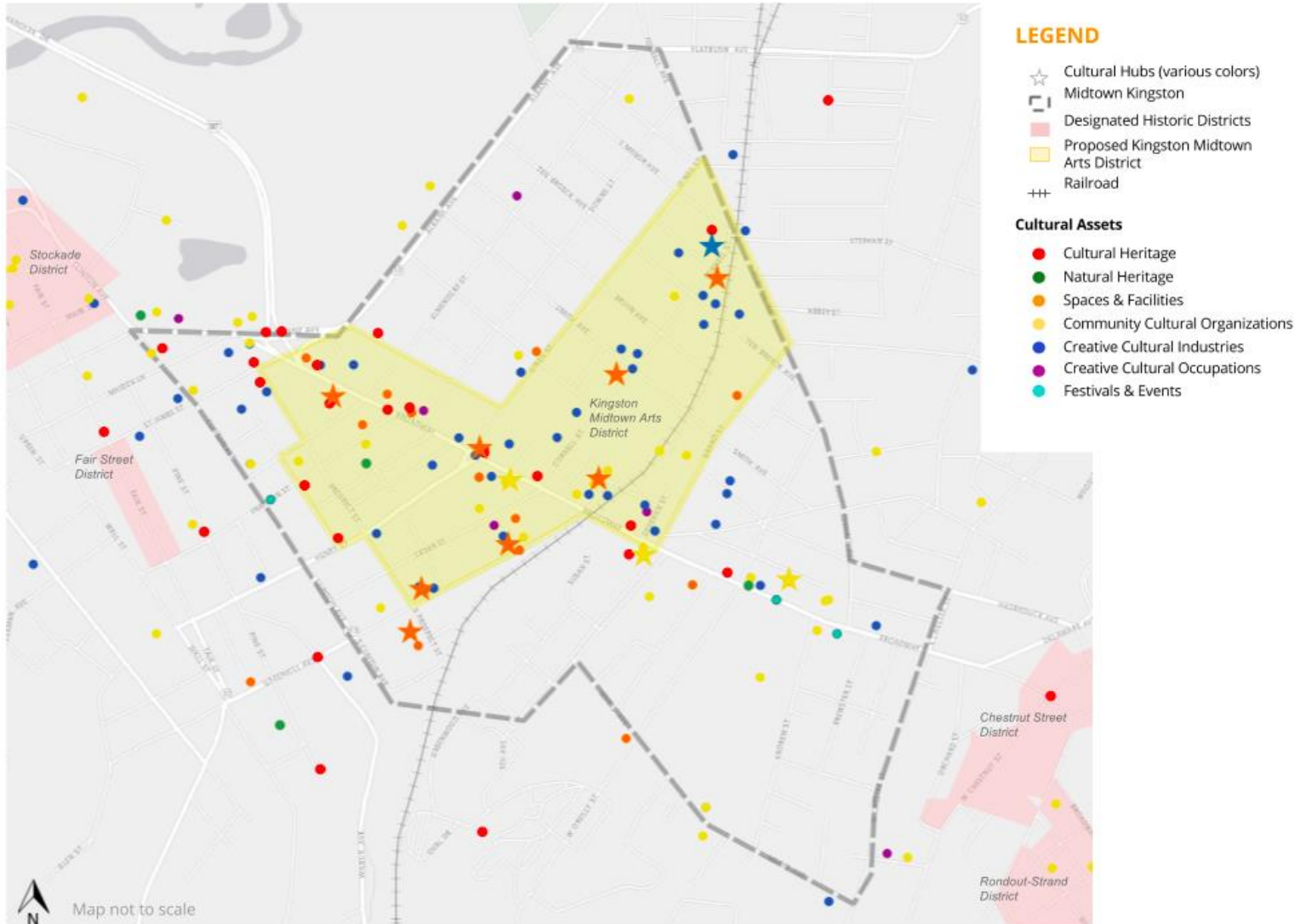
For more information: Kingston’s historic districts: [www.fohk.org](http://www.fohk.org) ; Midtown Arts District: [www.madkingston.org](http://www.madkingston.org)

### Analysis/Observations

- Midtown has lots of historic and cultural assets as the old industrial corridor of the city, however, has never been designated
- Cultural hubs (starts) are all located within KMAD district
- Need for attention to preservation of historic building stock and adaptive reuse
- Many cultural assets are not located within the proposed KMAD district area; consider expansion? Less rigid boundaries?  
Other planning implications for the district?
- Questions of how involved residential neighborhoods in the KMAD district are engaged and involved in the arts and creative/cultural activities being pursued
- Disconnect between existing historic district; are individual places --lack of cohesion about Kingston’s story of development; great opportunity to be “tied” together with a new narrative/branding of Midtown

## MIDTOWN'S CULTURAL ASSETS IN RELATION TO CULTURAL DISTRICTS

Midtown Kingston, New York, 12401



### **Greenline, Open Spaces, and Parks**

The Kingston Land Trust, in partnership with the City of Kingston and Ulster County, plans to create the Kingston Greenline, an inter-modal system of urban trails, bikeways, water-trails, sidewalks, and complete streets in and around the city and throughout Ulster County, aims to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access in Midtown, where trails and lanes will converge to connect Kingston's three business districts together. These infrastructure initiatives support improved mobility, accessibility, and quality of life, and are critical to our work to make Midtown a more desirable live-work destination. Many of Midtown's cultural assets are located along proposed and existing Greenline trails, which will make accessibility to and from these resources more feasible, easier, and safer.

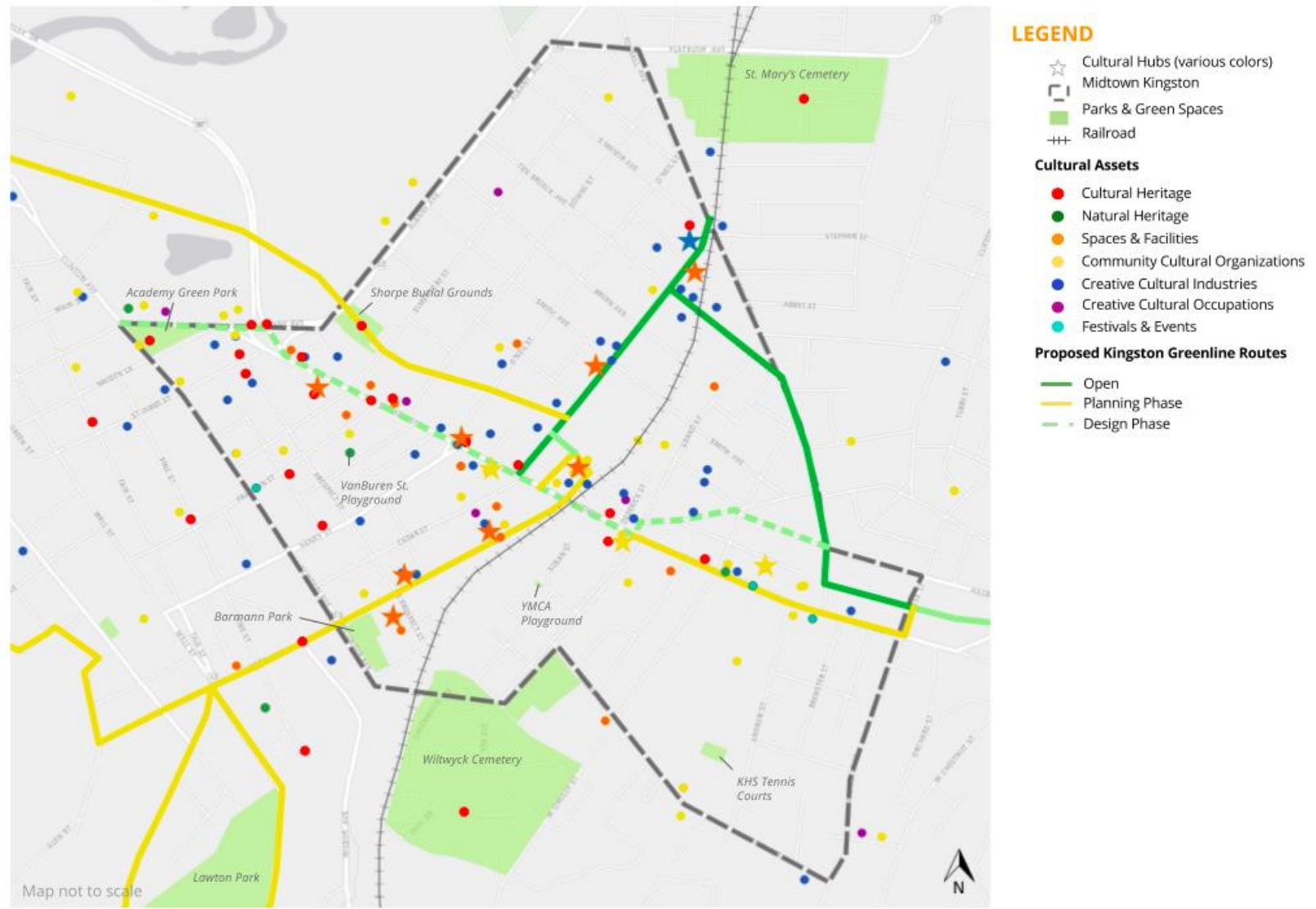
More information about the Greenline, see a detailed map in Appendix 9 and visit [www.kingstongreenline.org](http://www.kingstongreenline.org).

#### **Analysis/Observations**

- Many of cultural assets are located along the Greenline
- The Greenline and Linear park will be huge assets to future development of the arts district and other cultural activities. Create linkages that were missing before.
- Opportunity to connect with other city neighborhoods and create thematic trails for artist and gallery tours

## MIDTOWN'S CULTURAL ASSETS IN RELATION TO PARKS AND THE GREENLINE

Midtown Kingston, New York, 12401



## Public Transportation and Parking

Citibus is Kingston's primary form of public transportation, with three major bus routes and a paratransit service that run six days per week. All three Citibus routes traverse Midtown Kingston, which is essential for residents and visitors to access Midtown's cultural resources. The primary public transportation corridors in Midtown include Broadway, Foxhall Ave., Clinton Ave., Henry St., Albany Ave., Mary's Ave., and O'Reilly St. Kingston also has several municipal parking lots scattered throughout Midtown along Broadway.

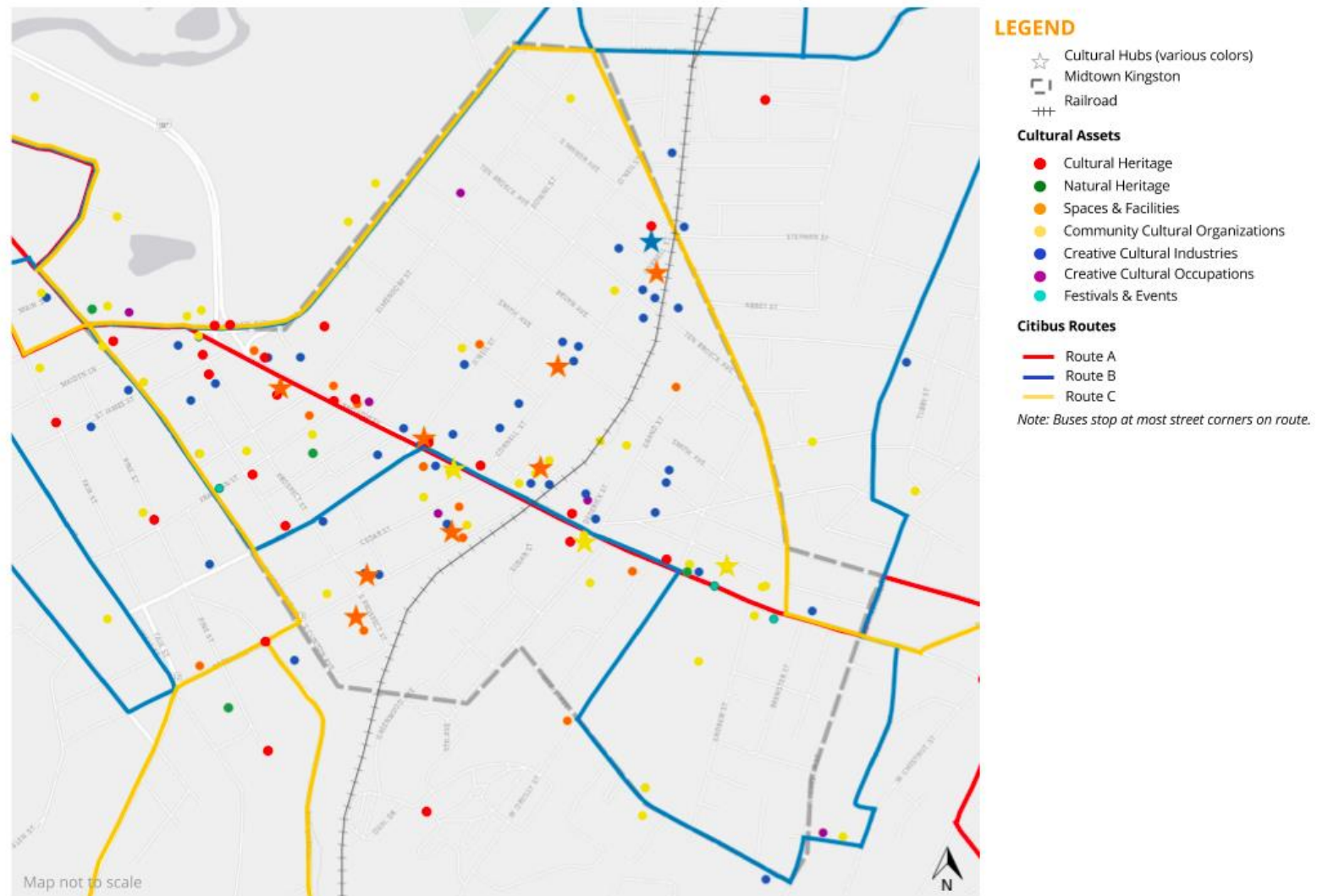
For more information about Kingston's Citibus and schedule, visit: <https://kingston-ny.gov/content/8399/8469/8473/default.aspx>

### Analysis/Observations

- Lack of public transportation options along Cornell and Greenkill; need connections for artist housing and studios
- Need for transit-oriented development and coordination with stops at major hubs
- Lots of street parking and a few public lots; is it enough? Planning implication for district development, neighborhood quality of life, and tourism development

## MIDTOWN'S CULTURAL ASSETS IN RELATION TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Midtown Kingston, New York, 12401





### **Vacant Lots, Parking Lots, and Large Impervious Spaces**

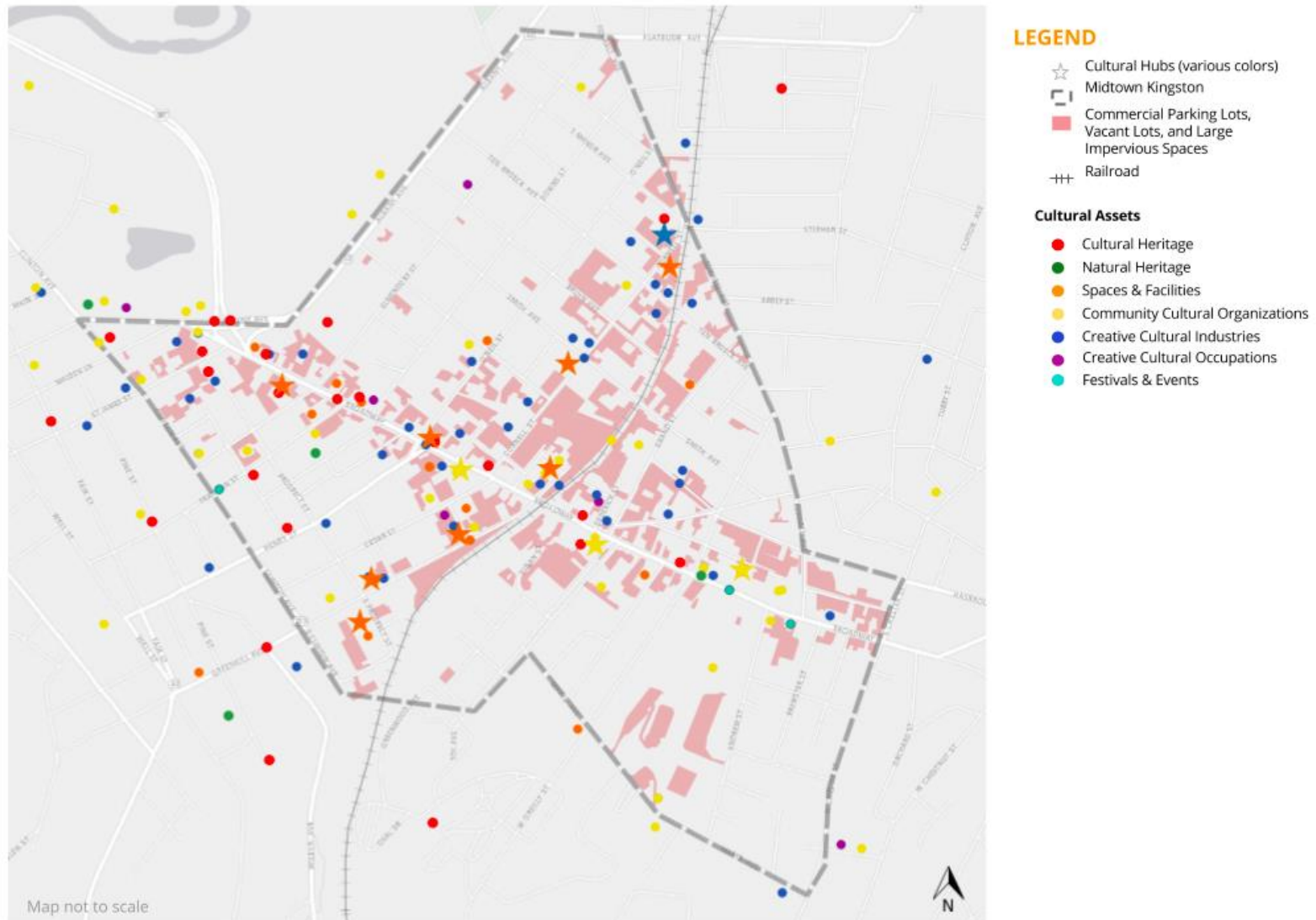
The purpose of this map is to demonstrate the amount of impervious and underutilized spaces that are located in Midtown. All commercial parking lots, vacant lots, and large impervious spaces/lots were traced in Google Map's Satellite view to show the extent of lot development in Midtown, and to provide a spatial analysis as it relates to cultural assets. This map shows that parking and vacant lots are heavily located along Broadway, Cornell St, O'Neil St, Greenkill Ave., and the railroad tracks, which are the areas of former industry and manufacturing, as well as the present-day corridors for the proposed Kingston Midtown Arts District.

### **Analysis/Observations**

- There is an abundance of underutilized space, especially within the proposed arts district
- This district demonstrates the potential for the use of arts and cultural activities to leverage opportunities for placemaking, new development and infill that support the arts, and manufacturing or industrial activities that require space

## MIDTOWN'S CULTURAL ASSETS IN RELATION TO VACANT LOTS AND SPACES

Midtown Kingston, New York, 12401





## Analysis

This section provides an analysis of findings based on this study of Midtown's assets, from both the maps and our analysis of Midtown's built, natural, and social environments. These findings should be discussed and tested within the community to ascertain their validity.

## Findings

We identified the major cultural "hubs", or areas with a concentration and mixture of cultural activities or assets, in Midtown. These locations could be considered as anchor hubs in the development of an arts district. These cultural hubs are indicated with stars on the map and include:

- ★ The Lace Mill - affordable "live/work" spaces for artists
- ★ The Pajama Factory, Brush Factory, and Shirt Factory - market rate, flexible "live/work" spaces for artists
- ★ Stockade Works - future site of a film production incubator
- ★ Cornell St. Studios - galleries and arts studios
- ★ The YMCA - a variety of community arts, sports, and urban agriculture activities
- ★ The Broadmoor Building - a variety of arts-related businesses and community arts activities
- ★ Seven21 Media Center - a hub of digital media and arts businesses
- ★ Kingston City Hall - a civic and cultural hub
- ★ 15 and 17 Railroad Avenue - two privately owned buildings with several arts-related tenants
- ★ UPAC - theater and arts anchor complex

Many of Midtown's cultural assets extend beyond the proposed KMAD boundaries. Examples include resources and businesses along St. James Street and southeastern side of Broadway (on the other side of the railroad).

### Resources that support assets

- Kingston City government
- RUPCO's provision of affordable housing for residents and artists
- Anchor cultural institutions
- KMAD
- Building a Better Broadway/ Broadway Streetscape project
- The proposed Kingston Greenline will provide new transportation and connectivity opportunities
- A strong institutional climate; overall, there is widespread support for and understanding of the value of the arts in Kingston
- The arts and cultural assets and activities outside of Midtown that support the district

### Threats to assets

- Midtown's **impervious and vacant spaces**, such as parking lots, pose issues for spatial connectivity in the Midtown Arts District. Many commercial parking lots and empty lots interrupt the streetscapes along Broadway, Cornell Street, Greenkill Ave., which also happen to be the primary corridors of the Kingston Midtown Arts District. While parking lots are not usually considered to be "vacant" spaces, they are often under-utilized, and the supply usually exceeds the demand. Parking lots interrupt the urban form, creating gaps in streetscapes that decrease street vitality, safety, and pedestrian activity. Although Midtown's parking lots pose significant gaps along the Art District's streetscapes, they could be leveraged as opportunities for infill development, whether it be housing, artist demonstrations, and community gardens or parks, for example.
- Midtown Kingston has become a hub for cultural and creative activity due to its **affordability**, compared with other art hubs in the region (e.g. Beacon, NYC, etc.). Increased speculation and rising real estate prices pose a threat to the viability of maintaining Midtown as an affordable place for artists and creative industries to live and work.
- There are **few natural heritage assets** in Midtown Kingston, signifying a lack of parks, open/green space, and public spaces for Midtown's residents.
- Lack of secure **funding** for additional planning and development of the district
- Lack of community engagement and outreach with adjacent neighborhood residents (Jordan Scruggs/ Midtown Rising can speak to this more fully). There appears to be a **disconnect between the neighborhood residents and their involvement with the development of the arts district. Identifying assets that are within local control of the neighborhood's**

**residents and ways to leverage these can help bridge this gap.**

- Perceptions of safety in Midtown.

#### **Opportunities associated with assets**

- Revitalization of Midtown Kingston; cultural assets give Midtown a positive identity
- Urban infill and economic development opportunities to address income inequality
- Leveraging these assets to establish a regionally-recognized arts and retail destination
- Vacant lots and spaces, such as Broadway Commons, can be transformed into urban parks or public plazas.

#### **Strategies to sustain assets**

- **Creation of a master plan** for the Kingston Midtown Arts District to guide future development of the district
- Designation of the Broadway Corridor/Midtown as a **historic district** at the local, state, and national level; provides opportunities for tax credits to restore and rehabilitate buildings
- Development of a **walking or tour program/map** to encourage residents explore the district
- **Improved signage** and wayfinding assistance.
- **Regional promotion strategies.** We need to put Midtown “on the map,” so to speak.
- On-going maintenance and updates of the Cultural Asset database and maps. Outreach with local artists and identifying areas for collaboration.
- Creating commercial parking-lot sharing arrangements with local arts-based/ creative businesses and organizations
- Engagement of residents and business owners. **Buy-in is critical.**

## Urgent needs identified

- The need for additional protections for Midtown's historically significant buildings, such as **local, state, or national designation**. Designation of individual buildings and the district as a whole should be considered.
- **A space to share the history of Midtown**. Lots of focus on the history of the Stockade and Rondout Districts, but little attention to the significance of the Midtown in the city's and region's historical context. Street placards, a visitor center, or other informational/interpretation opportunities are needed to preserve
- **Designation of clear boundaries** for the Midtown Arts District. It is currently identified as the Broadway, Cornell, and Greenkill corridors, but the "beginning" and "end" of the district is not clear, especially given the number of assets surrounding the district.
- Creating recognizable **gateways** into the district; **signage and wayfinding**
- **Improved sidewalks and pedestrian crossings**, especially along Broadway (high traffic)

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

There are three primary ways that Cultural Mapping is typically used:

- to **inform planning, economic, and community development**
- to **increase community awareness**
- to **support arts district development**

We recommend the following **Action Steps**:

### 6. Develop and implement a communications plan to raise awareness of the project and its findings.

- a. Publish this report and maps on the City of Kingston website
  - i. Publish a press release with the findings of this report and send to Kingston Time, HV1, and Freeman
  - ii. Share findings of the report and link to maps on the City's social media account.
  - iii. Work with KMAD and the Arts Commission to send copies of the report and maps to arts-based businesses and organizations in Kingston.
- b. Convene stakeholders to share and align the findings of this report.
  - i. Convene key stakeholders at a meeting or forum to discuss maps and report findings; brainstorm ways cultural assets can be leveraged to revitalize Midtown and inform the continued development of the Midtown Arts District.
  - ii. Discuss Kingston's art/cultural scenes in uptown and downtown and identify connections and collaborations.
- c. Identify a repository to maintain cultural mapping data and examine the potential for an ongoing cultural mapping partnership with interested agencies or stakeholders.

- i. Identify and secure city administrators, community members, or stakeholders to maintain the cultural asset map and database.
- ii. Based on discussions with stakeholders, determine additional data, maps, or plans that would be useful to further explore as a result of this study.

## **7. Maintain Data on Midtown's Arts District.**

This will support planning and ongoing economic development activities in Midtown:

- a. Collect contributions of different stakeholders to add to the database. Consider using a "wiki-based" approach, where community members can add information to the database.
- b. Designate a trustworthy community member or leader to maintain and update the database

## **8. Integrate findings of this Cultural Asset report into a serious strategy for economic development in Kingston.**

The strategy should align with plans for equitable development initiatives. This It should include the findings of the "Existing Conditions" section of the report (demographic profile, employment, regional economic context, housing, etc.) along with additional research on potential economic benefits as follows:

### **a. Technical assistance and marketing:**

- i. Target technical assistance for small arts-based businesses in marketing, outreach, storefront improvements, merchandise display, and coordinated marketing with other Arts District businesses and cultural activities.
- ii. Offer supports and incentives to Minority and Women-owned businesses, youth-run small businesses may have unique needs that will require some modification of existing business assistance programs.

### **b. Financial incentives and resources:**

- i. Detailed feasibility testing will be required to assess the potential depth of market demand for specific uses such as residential, commercial, and mixed-use development.
  - ii. **Dedicated public-sector funding commitments** in the plan's early years will be critical in leveraging subsequent private-sector investment in specific projects
  - iii. **Public incentives to leverage private investment** may take many forms. Their availability will be determined, in large part, by the degree of support from public officials and other City leaders. To establish momentum for the Arts District, "early wins" are critical. Therefore, early-on public participation in the form of low-interest loans and grants for building/façade renovations, technical assistance, coordinated public improvements to infrastructure, public space and streetscapes, adequately-funded municipal services such as public safety, and expeditious public review of projects, as appropriate, are illustrative of the range of public mechanisms designed to offer incentives for private redevelopment.
  - iv. **Leadership in developing well-designed streetscape improvements, creative and dynamic public art and landscaped gateways** to the District, and vibrant cultural arts programming in the Arts District will demonstrate the district's strength and drawing power and serve as a further boost to private redevelopment.
- c. Develop a realistic plan with action steps and timelines for implementation.

## 9. Integrate findings of this Cultural Assets report into a plan for the Arts District and equitable development in Midtown Kingston.

### a. Approach

This plan would be culmination of analysis, planning, and community involvement and would prioritize the needs and desires of the diverse constituencies that will be affected. Identify a range of reuses for vacant or underutilized buildings that maximize each building's potential in contributing to the Arts District.

- i. Create a framework that encourages a dialogue between real estate owners and managers, developers, artists, colleges,

business owners, cultural organizations, financial institutions, and the City to encourage the sale, purchase and/or rehabilitation of vacant or underutilized buildings in the District.

- ii. Encourage a strong, diverse base of support for cultural economic development among community, political, educational, and business leaders
- iii. Identify implementation strategies and possible funding sources for the Arts District plan.

#### **b. Urban design and land use**

- i. Consider all the vacant/underutilized sites and buildings as a group (see Midtown Cultural Assets in Relation to Vacant Lots and Spaces map above) and develop a plan that incorporates a balance of open space and built space and questions of connectivity, public space, and ways to overcome barriers such as the train line.
- ii. Consider ideas for new open space and/or parks.
- iii. Suggest opportunities for public art, streetscape improvements, and signage throughout the District.
- iv. Identify gateways and transitions for streets leading to the District.

#### **c. Housing and Historic Preservation**

This study included assessment of the project area and the creation of a vision for the Arts District build on the assets and opportunities inherent to the district's unique character.

- i. Develop strategies for preservation and rehabilitation of existing, deteriorated housing stock, including an increase of programs for avoiding displacement (e.g., housing trust fund, land bank programs, weatherization, energy upgrades).
- ii. Create a database of Kingston's cultural and heritage assets to coordinate with cultural tourism entities.
- iii. Identify opportunities for affordable artist live/work space, mixed-income housing, cultural activities, businesses, and educational activities in the District.



#### **d. Data Collection and Review**

In addition to the maps incorporated into this report, the Community Impact Measures Reports (CIMS) and data collected by RUPCO should be consulted for use in future planning. Additional background for these recommendations includes the author's extensive experience with planning and development in Kingston, including years of study, numerous stakeholder interviews and focus group meetings with leaders and activists in economic development and real estate, the arts, non-profit institutions and organizations, and the community.

#### **e. Property Inventory and Evaluation**

The CIMS study and the analysis for the CLG included a detailed recording of streetscape conditions, building conditions, building sizes, ownership of parcels, existing businesses, and information on parking, landmarks and vacancies (condition surveys were done for CIMS, but did not include all of Midtown). These should be carefully reviewed and evaluated in future planning for Midtown.

#### **f. Economic Analysis and Strategies**

In addition to the data gathered for this report, a detailed economic analysis for Midtown should consider potential funding sources, cost of property development, economic and financial analysis, building data, selected case examples, a cost/benefits of economic development and property development in the district, and other related information necessary for implementation.

**Identify public incentives** in the form of guaranteed loans, tax breaks, and public infrastructure improvements serve testament to the city's commitment to an arts district and pave the way for private investment in an area. Incentives can take many forms such as fiscal policies, physical streetscape and utility improvements, and coordinated city marketing efforts to attract and retain artists and other businesses.

#### **g. Community Participation**

Community participation for such a plan should include at least three community-wide meetings with opportunities for small break-out groups for more active engagement and discussion of the issues, countless individual interviews, and several focus group meetings.

## **h. Policy Measures**

Compare Kingston and Midtown's context other places (in Kingston, Ulster County, and Hudson Valley). Learn about best practices in other communities attempting to develop arts and cultural districts while dealing with the effects of gentrification.

- i.** Identify mechanisms for the designation of the arts district, including incentives and zoning changes;
- ii.** Make inclusionary zoning recommendations for housing to protect existing residents and keep housing affordable;
- iii.** Identify actions for greater housing and social inclusion in as envisioned in Kingston's comprehensive plan and develop targeted policies for Midtown; adopt these policies as "elements of the comprehensive plan."
- iv.** Propose streamlining permitting and code compliance reviews and inspections to offer incentives for development and to eliminate unknown factors in the purchase and renovation process for professional developers and for artists seeking their own live/ work space.

## **i. Zoning changes**

Challenges are faced by artists who work and live in the same location but are legally prohibited from do so by zoning regulations where residential and commercial or industrial zones are traditionally segregated. Arts District zoning typically allows artist live/work uses, other residential uses, and industrial and commercial uses to occur in the same area. Metal welding, kiln work, and glass blowing are all allowable uses within an arts district that also allow residential and commercial uses. Zoning changes seek to encourage the diversity of uses and flexibility of spaces that make a district affordable for artists and a compelling destination for visitors and residents.

## **j. Additional Study Needed**

Provide analyses of the following to support improved access, mobility, safety around and within the arts district. Create map analysis showing: interruptions in building/activity edge; pedestrian barriers; pen/green space; gateways; and destinations, including:

- i. Historic and significant buildings:** Extensive studies have been done with CLG funds from OPRHP.

1. Create map analysis showing: historic buildings (on the local, state, and national registers) and significant buildings.
2. Do an analysis of significant buildings' suitability for adaptive reuse: identification of those with large floor areas (e.g., over 20,000 square feet of space); inventory buildings and create database including: Building Name, Location, Footprint, Total Square Foot, and Possible Uses, Estimated Acquisition Costs, and degree of repair needed
- ii. **Vacant buildings and lots:** conduct a map analysis of vacant lots, vacant buildings and storefronts, and parking lots in the arts district.
- iii. **Street activity and public safety:** identify blighted areas or places within the arts district that are perceived as unsafe or pose hazards. Some of this was done by Cornell Cooperative Extension in 2008, but would require revisiting.
- iv. **Access and visibility:** this would include analysis of regional, city-wide, and local access to the arts district; identity linkages, public transit, major routes, drive times, and gateways, with the goal of creating a plan and strategies for regional and local marketing and promotion.
- v. **Opportunities for public art and improved landscaping:**
  1. Explore options and strategies for the future "Art Walk" in Kingston
  2. Identify opportunities for public art. There are specific sites for public art and opportunities for the integration of landscape and art in designated areas along Broadway, Cornell St., and Greenkill Ave. Some of these sites are illustrated on the map and include vacant lots that could be transformed into small sculpture gardens and community parks and courtyard areas within the Kingston Midtown Arts District.
  3. The City should work in collaboration with artists to determine the design and materials for Streetscape Improvements, including street signage, furniture, trees, planting, and facade improvements.
  4. Develop a list of artists, architects, landscape architects, lighting designers, and graphic artists who are available for technical assistance and collaborative efforts for redevelopment, new projects, and minor renovations. Building owners could then work with people from this list and generate new ideas for their building renovation plans.
  5. Public design competitions should be held for the design of gateways. These competitions can be regional or national

in nature and will not only provide gateway design submissions but will also serve to publicize the District and bring artists to Kingston. Each gateway has its own character, and each possesses unique opportunities for public art and physical improvements.

- vi. Identify areas of emphasis within the Arts District: Create a map to identify primary areas of access (main streets and sidewalks), major destination zones, and gateways. Stakeholder input and the Cultural Asset Maps created for Midtown Kingston can be used to inform this analysis.
- vii. Develop an inventory of spaces that could accommodate and showcase local and regional artists, craftspeople, and retail businesses. Up to 100,000 square feet could offer unique, handcrafted, antique, and salvaged home items for the Upstate NY market. This would require planning:
  - 1. Business recruitment and incentives.
  - 2. A management or oversight organization.
  - 3. Physical design improvements and excellent access and visibility.
  - 4. Attracting and retaining “unique” businesses, artists, and craftspeople.
- viii. Identify possible areas for parking, including streets, vacant lots, and shared lots (for day/night use). Surface parking should be discouraged from Midtown since it erodes the continuous street wall of buildings and does not contribute to the vitality of the street. The parking requirements for the District should be addressed by assessing all available parcels, factoring in on-street parking, and reviewing the hours of operations for the diverse uses in the District. New parking areas and/or service drives should be located in the rear of buildings. Create an inventory of possible parking locations for the district, including lot name & location, address, estimated capacity, lot size, notes, and current status. At some point, as the District grows more successful and parking becomes more of a challenge for visitors and residents, investigation into the feasibility and funding for a structured parking deck may be required.
- ix. **Identify development, activity, and building use goals for the Arts District:** The district should have a mix of diverse for 24-hour vitality. The uses recommended should serve residential neighborhoods, a community of artists and arts

organizations, and a regional and local visitor population. This diversity of uses should fit the physical and market characteristics of the District and the whole city, and reflect the goals identified through this and the Equitable Development process. These goals are informed by several prior planning exercises, including the cultural asset map, and community/stakeholder charrettes. Goals already articulated in these previous studies that should be included:

1. Places for artist/public interaction: coffee shops, galleries, and performance spaces.
  2. Multiple choices and a diversity of uses to foster a rich creative environment.
  3. A safe environment.
  4. Affordable housing for all residents, including artist live/work space
  5. Ownership opportunities for artists.
  6. Good opportunities to exhibit work.
  7. Accessible transportation and parking for visitors.
  8. Strong recognition of the Arts District; very visible positive image.
  9. Organization of events and places, one central place where for information.
  10. Good social environments for artist interaction with their peers.
- x.** Based on economic analyses and a physical inventory and assessment of the District, recommend the square footage of uses needed to support new development in the Arts District. In addition to building uses, the program for the Arts District must include activities and programming such as festivals, open gallery night, street closings, and other special events.
  - xi.** Plan for gentrification to protect current residents and affordable housing for artists (connections with the Equitable Development Plan).
  - xii.** Explore options for creating an “Arts Overlay District” that would serve to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the community; to promote the expansion of commercial art and craft activities as a compatible land use within the

AOD; and to enhance the environment and improve site opportunities for commercial art and craft activities within the AOD. Make recommendations for parking, dimensional requirements, signs, and uses in the District.

## **5. Continue to Incorporate Stakeholder Input and Community Engagement**

Those who contributed to this report included:

- KMAD Steering Committee, including numerous roundtable discussions on Arts District strategies. Further discussions with KMAD are recommended to review this final report for their input in to the recommended Arts District plan.
- Residents of the Lace Mill (and tenant representative Sarah Carlson), Richard Frumess (R&F Handmade Paints), Lisa Kelly (Piazza properties --Pajama, Shirt, and Brush Factories).
- Refer back to the historic resources inventory compiled by Jack Braunlein and Kitty McCullough for the City of Kingston funded by OPRHP.
- City of Kingston Office of Community and Economic Development
- Additional outreach should include roundtable discussions or workshops to gather feedback and suggestions from KMAD, Arts District Commission, RUPCO, CCE, Midtown Rising, residents, etc.

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## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1. Cultural Asset Maps**

**Appendix 2: Map of “Potential Environmental Justice Areas in the City of Kingston Ulster County, New York”**

**Appendix 3: Parks Inventory, Kingston, NY (from the Recreation Master Plan for the City of Kingston, 2013)**

**Appendix 4: City of Kingston Zoning Map**

**Appendix 5: Kingston Census Tracts**

**Appendix 6. Cultural Asset Framework**

**Appendix 8: Community Impact Measures Midtown Kingston Survey Area**

**Appendix 9: Kingston Greenline Map**

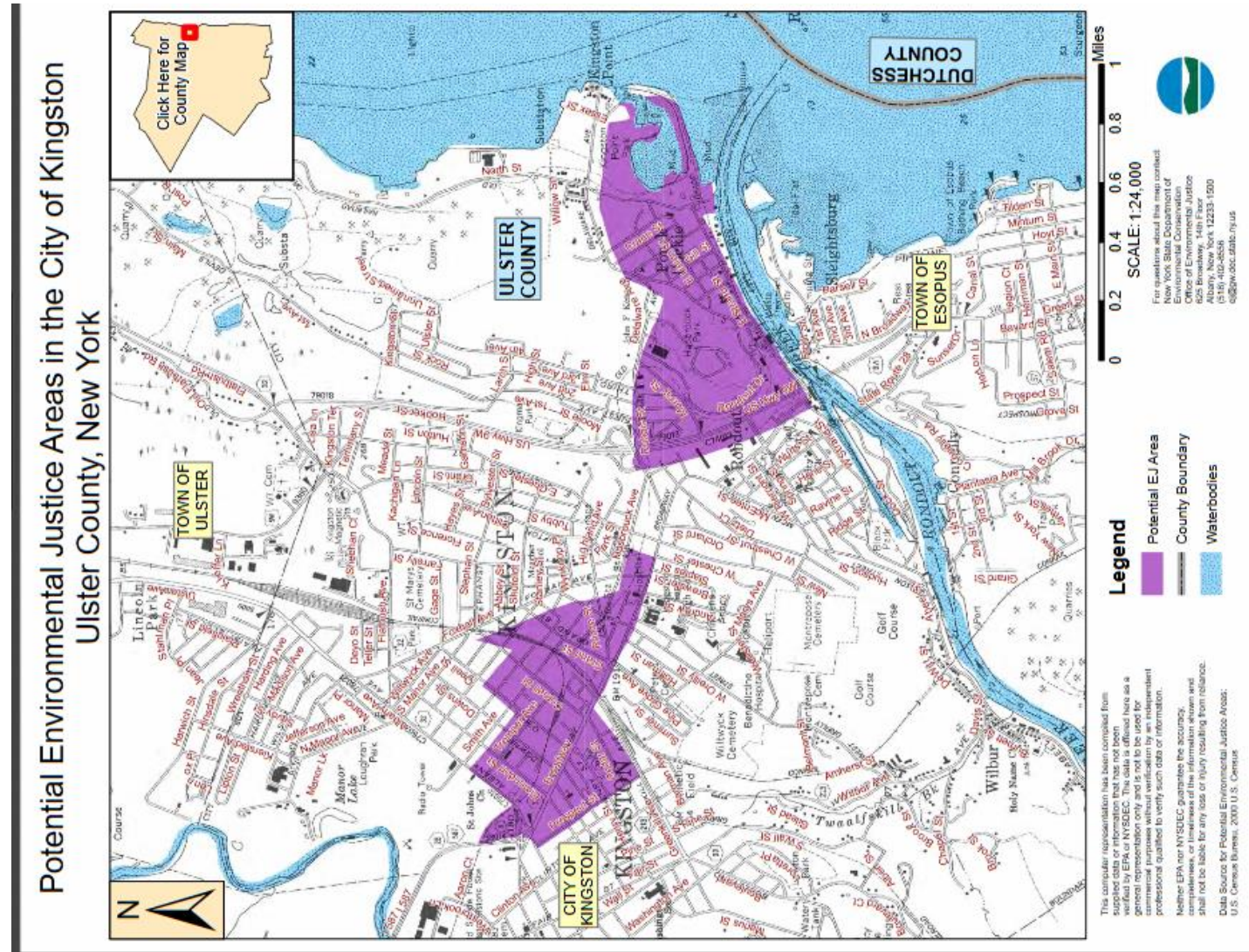
## **Appendix 1. Cultural Asset Maps**

*(page intentionally left blank; high resolution format provided separately; see body of report for maps)*



## Appendix 2: Map of "Potential Environmental Justice Areas in the City of Kingston Ulster County, New York"

[http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits\\_ej\\_operations\\_pdf/ulsterej.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits_ej_operations_pdf/ulsterej.pdf)



Appendix 3: Parks Inventory, Kingston, NY (from the *Recreation Master Plan for the City of Kingston*, 2013)

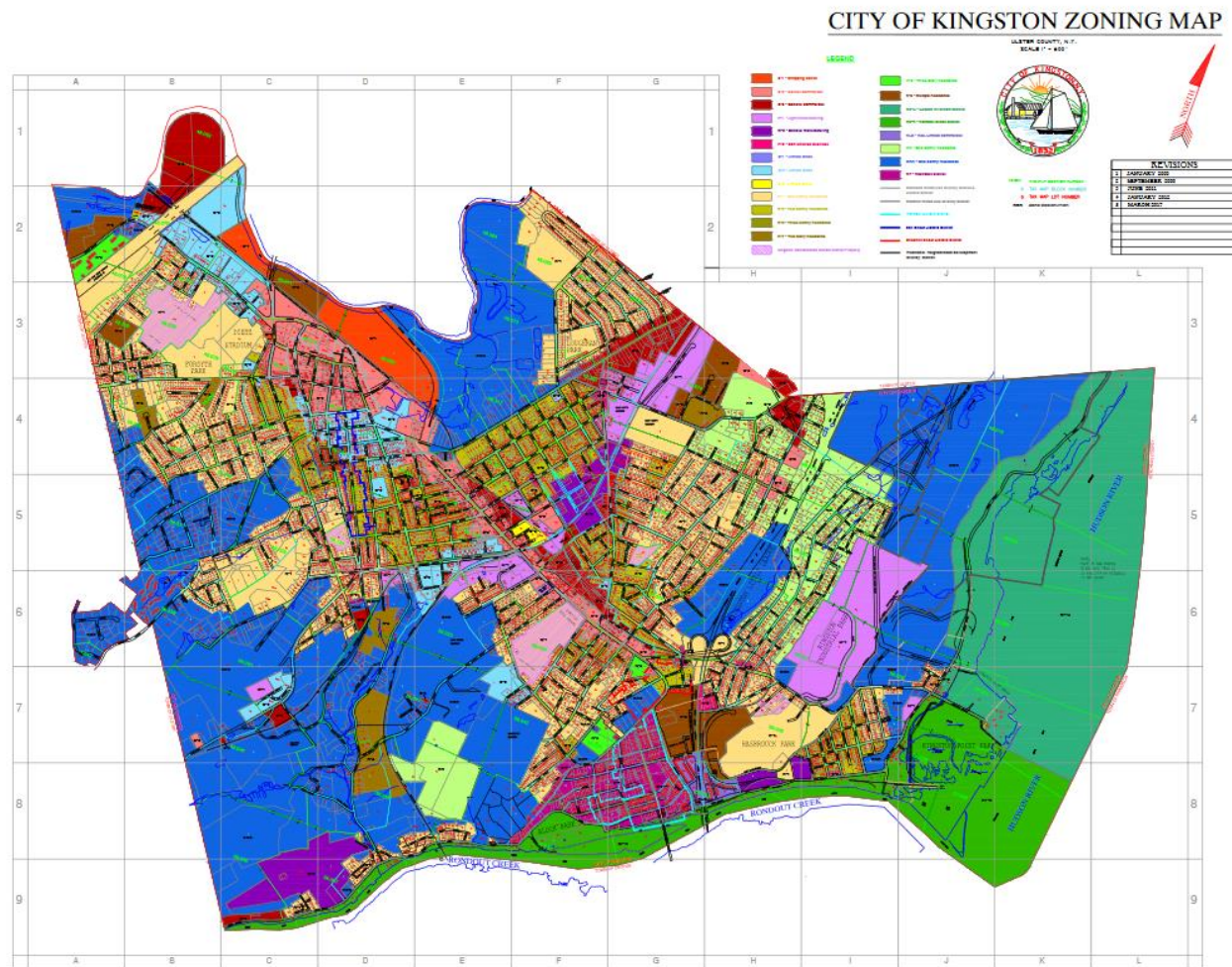
Table 3 – Parks Inventory

PARK / FACILITY <i>Special Purpose = Blue (1-9); Community = Green (10-12); Neighborhood = White (13-23); Other = Orange (24-29)</i>		ACRES	FEATURE	OTHER FEATURES	Playgr'nd (L= large)	Baseball field	Tennis	Basketball	Volleyball
1.	Andretta Pool	1.4	Pool facility	Picnic					
2.	Andy Murphy Midtwn Cnter	1.1	Indoor court	Meeting room, stage				1/2	1/2
3.	Dietz Stad(ftball; fieldh; lax)	12.1	Multipurpose field	Track				1	
4.	Forsyth Nature Center		Zoo (part of Forsyth Park)						
5.	Hodge Center	0.2							
6.	Kingston Point Beach	10.6	Bathing beach	Car-top boat launch	1				4
7.	Rondout Center	0.3	Indoor court					1	
8.	Rondout Lighthouse	84.7	Iconic structure	Dike					
9.	TR Gallo Park	1.4	Waterfront	Linear park					
10.	Forsyth Park	18.5	Lawn field		1L	2L	6		
11.	Hasbrouck Park	45.0	Rec Court		1	1S		1	
12.	Kingston Point	87.4	Field lighting; BMX course	Trails, picnic		1S			
13.	4th Ward Memorial Park	0.9							
14.	Academy Green	1.5							
15.	Block Park	7.1	Field lighting		1	1S		1	
16.	Cornell Park	3.0							
17.	Gill St. Playground	0.2			1				
18.	Hutton Park	6.0	Lawn/ Rec field		1		2	1	
19.	J.R. Schultz Complex	18.7	Lawn/ Rec field			2L			
20.	Loughran	7.5			1	1B	4	1	
21.	Murray St. Courts	1.7		Open space				2	
22.	Peace Park & Chapel St. Park	1.8		2 sites / each passive					
23.	Van Buren Park	0.1			1				
24.	Bailey & Edson Schools	5.0	High/low ropes			1L		1	
25.	G.W. School	0.5			1			1	
26.	Kingston High School	3.0	Small rec field				4		
27.	B's/G's Clubs & Metro' Park	2.8			1	1L		2	
28.	YMCA	1.0	Small rec field		1			3	
29.	Ballfield @ Kingston Plaza	3.3				1B			
<b>TOTALS</b>					<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>4.5</b>

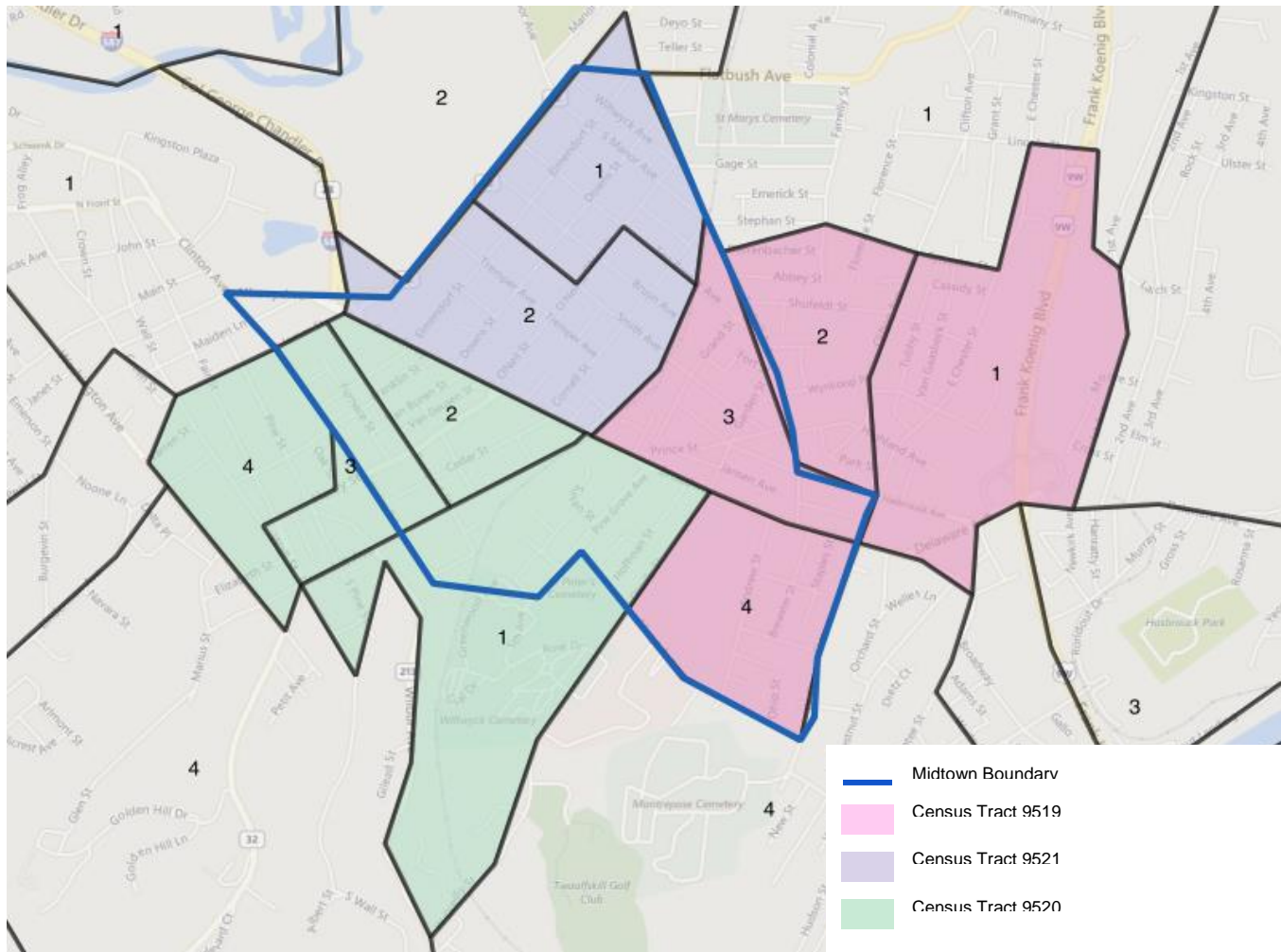


## Appendix 4: City of Kingston Zoning Map (date)

[https://kingston-ny.gov/filestorage/8399/10789/Most Current Revised Zoning Basemap 600 scale 3x5 NO street key 3-23-17-Model \(002\).pdf](https://kingston-ny.gov/filestorage/8399/10789/Most%20Current%20Revised%20Zoning%20Basemap%20600%20scale%203x5%20NO%20street%20key%203-23-17-Model%20(002).pdf)



## Appendix 5: Kingston Census Tracts



### Midtown Kingston Survey Area (2016)





**Appendix 7. Table of Parks and Playground in Midtown Kingston that Support Active Recreation**

Name	Amenities	Location
Van Buren Playground	Playground	Van Buren St.
YMCA Playground	Playground, field	Susan St.
Kingston High School	Tennis courts	Andrews St.
Metro Park/ Boys & Girls Club of Ulster County	Playground, ball field, basketball court	South Clinton Ave. & Barmann Ave.

Source: *City of Kingston Parks & Recreation Master Plan* (Gilmour Planning 2013)



## Appendix 9: Kingston Greenline Map

