Recommendations

A. Encourage Mixed Use Development. The City should encourage and support mixed-use development in the entire waterfront area that will enhance the existing character of each of the waterfront districts. Development should be sensitive to the predominant use in the district, including the industrial nature of the Cherry Street District, the West End Waterfront District as a vibrant commercial district, the Market District as a food production district, and the Newman District as a recreational/residential district.

B. Encourage Housing Opportunities for all Income Levels. The City should encourage residential opportunities for people of all income levels to be developed in the waterfront area. This can be accomplished by offering zoning incentives or tax abatements that encourage the inclusion of lower income housing opportunities along with market rate development.

C. Encourage Public Access to the Waterfront. As the waterfront develops, the area should remain a space open and accessible to all. The City should ensure that all new development reserves space for public walkways along the waterfront.

D. Encourage Better Multi Modal Connections. The City should encourage development at the waterfront to have better multi modal connections to all areas. New development should consider pedestrian, bike, and public transit connections and reserve space for these modes to allow access to and from all portions of the waterfront.

E. Encourage a Vibrant Waterfront. The City should encourage mixed use development that includes commercial and residential uses that will allow the waterfront area to be occupied at all times of day throughout the year, resulting in a more vibrant space.

The plan recommends active mixed-uses with year round activity and improvements to multimodal connections and public access to the waterfront. Do you think the waterfront should contain year round active uses at all hours of the day and night?
Waterfront District – Character Area Boundaries

As part of Phase II of the Comprehensive Plan, the Waterfront Study Area can be divided into five character area districts that elaborate on Phase I by identifying areas of similar existing and future planned uses. These districts are the Cherry Street District, the West End/Waterfront District, the Market District, and the Newman District. The trail network throughout this area acts as a link connecting the districts to the waterfront and to each other.
Cherry Street District

Waterfront Character Areas- Cherry Street District
The Cherry Street District is bordered on the west by the Flood Control Channel, to the north by Six Mile Creek, and to the east by Nate’s Floral Estates. A portion also includes land between Cecil B. Malone Drive and Six Mile Creek.

Existing Characteristics
This district has an industrial character featuring several long-standing local businesses, including a metal scrap yard, manufacturing and high-tech businesses, and other commercial establishments. There is also a 25-foot permanent maintenance easement between the water and the buildings, in which construction is prohibited.

Challenges
Visibility — Much of the district has little or no visibility from Route 13 and other main roads.
Traffic Circulation — The Cherry Street District has only one through street with no sidewalks.
High Development Costs — As this area develops, the demand for waterfront land may drive up the cost of land. This, coupled with the expensive foundations that are required to offset the impact of poor soils, could pose challenges to development of non-residential uses, which could make it difficult to include a mix of uses.

Expansion of Business Opportunities — This district contains several long-standing, well-established businesses. The City should encourage new or expanded opportunities to create well-paying jobs.

Opportunities
This district has several opportunities for development/redevelopment of sites, including the following:
> Cherry Street Extension
> Infill Opportunities
> Industrial Character
> Future Black Diamond Trail Connection
> Expansion of Business Opportunities

Planned Characteristics
Encourage Mixed-Use and/or Live/Work — The City should encourage and support mixed-use development that is compatible with the existing industrial uses and that allows for live/work opportunities. Mixed-use development can include residential uses and commercial uses. Additionally, light industrial and manufacturing uses would encourage job creation and allow for residential uses to coexist.

Retain Industrial Character — The Cherry Street District is one of the few areas in the City that has existing industrial uses. This industrial character defines this district and should be retained and encouraged.

Improve Multi Modal Transportation Connections — Given the limited road network in this district, alternative transportation is critical for development to expand in this area. The completion of the Black Diamond Trail will provide more opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle transportation. In addition, the planned reconstruction/realignment of the Brindley Bridge will allow for better automotive access into the district.

Seek Development Opportunities that Result in 24/7 Activity — The encouragement of mixed residential/commercial development in this area will also encourage 24/7 activity.

Do you think Cherry Street should remain mostly industrial?
Do you think it should be encouraged to have 24/7 activity?
The West End/Waterfront District

Waterfront Character Areas – West End Waterfront District
The West End/Waterfront District is bordered to the south by Six Mile Creek, to the west by the Cayuga Inlet, to the north by Cascadilla Street and by the Flood Control Channel, and to the east by Route 13/Meadow Street.

Existing Characteristics
This district is the most developed portion of the waterfront area. It is characterized by several long-standing local businesses and a mix of historic buildings. There are still several areas of underdeveloped land that have potential to be redeveloped.

Challenges
Traffic — The district is bound on the east by the southbound section of Route 13, which also contains major connections to the east and west. Several times throughout the day this area becomes heavily congested and can cause travel delays and difficulty for cars exiting businesses along Route 13. This results in patrons avoiding this area during peak times and diverting to other routes. In addition, trains can block traffic, further exacerbating the congestion.

Pedestrian and Bike Safety — Parts of this area feel unsafe and stressful to bicyclists and pedestrians. This is due in part to the high levels of traffic, but also to the lack of infrastructure for these modes of travel.

Opportunities
Trail Connections — Connections to the Cayuga waterfront trail. This is the only district not yet connected to the waterfront trail.

Development/Redevelopment of Underutilized Properties — Support the relocation of the Coast Guard Auxiliary

Planned Characteristics
City Gateway and Transportation Hub — Work with TCAT to develop direct transport between the West End, downtown, and college campuses.
Safety — Improve safety perceptions by creating improved, consistent lighting
Signage — Create better way-finding signage, including electronic directory of places around the city.
Connections — Enhance connections between the waterfront and the Ithaca Commons, particularly across Route 13 (Meadow and Fulton Streets) and along the State Street Corridor.
Retention of Existing Businesses — Encourage and promote existing local businesses.

The focus of the West End/Waterfront District is that it is a gateway and transportation hub. Given limited resources, do you think the City’s main area of improvement for this district should be signage and enhancing connections? Are there other improvements that should be made?
The Market District

Waterfront Character Areas - Market District
The Market District is bordered to the south by Cascadilla Street, to the west by the Cayuga Inlet, to the north by Cascadilla Creek to the north, and to the east by Routh 13.

Existing Characteristics
Existing uses in this district include the Ithaca Area Waste Water Treatment Plant, the Ithaca Farmers Market, the Ithaca Community Gardens, the undeveloped Carpenter Business Park, surface parking, several commercial businesses, the NYS DOT Maintenance Facility, and the Cornell and IC Boathouses.

Challenges
Challenges related to the Market District include:

Railroad — The Norfolk Southern Cargo railroad tracks run through the center of the Market District, dividing potential development sites. A single railroad crossing limits the district’s entry and exit options. When the trains arrive in the City, they are very long and slow moving, causing traffic to back up while waiting for them to pass. The trains also create noise and vibrations, a potential source of disturbance to future residential uses.

Fuel Storage — Currently there is a fueling station with fuel storage located adjacent to the water. This is a potential safety risk for future residential development and of environmental concern due to the potential for leakage in such close proximity to the water.

Power Lines — Currently, high tensioned power lines run through the Market District. This is a challenge for development of some parcels, since structures are not permitted beneath the power lines, reducing buildable area. Future development will need to take into consideration the limitations of particular sites.

Opportunities
Highway Access — The Market District is located along NYS Route 13.

Future Microgrid — The Tompkins County Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) is located in the Market District. This facility provides an opportunity to utilize excess energy to provide alternate sources of electricity. Plans are currently being developed to create a Microgrid system that would distribute electricity to surrounding area.

Make Use of WWTP Excess Heat Energy — Future development opportunities should consider how to incorporate waste heat from the WWTP.

NY State Department Of Transportation Site (NYSDOT) — A large 6-acre site located within the Market District is currently being used as a NYSDOT maintenance facility. The land is valued at approximately $1.5 million. The site is located beside the Ithaca Farmers Market and is adjacent to the waterfront. The City and the County have been working with the NYSDOT to try and re-locate the DOT facility and free up the land for redevelopment. This parcel has tremendous redevelopment potential.

The plan recommends improvements to Route 13 to make it less of a highway and more like a City street. What do you think of this recommendation? What kind of development do you think the City should encourage for the DOT site?
The Newman District

Waterfront Character Areas- Newman District

The Newman District is bordered to the south by Cascadilla Creek, to the west by the Cayuga Inlet, to the north by the Newman Golf Course, and to the east by Route 13 to the East.

Existing Characteristics

Existing uses in this district include the City’s Streets and Facilities buildings, Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT) facilities, and docks. Several existing, long-time businesses are located in this area. A fire-training center is located to the north in Stewart Park.

Challenges

Challenges to development in this district are similar to those in other parts of the waterfront, including poor soil conditions and expensive construction costs. Further challenges in the Newman District include:

City and TCAT Facilities — Much of the land in the Newman District is occupied by the City’s Streets and Facilities building and storage and by the Tompkins County Area Transit Facilities. The City and TCAT have discussed the possibility of relocating these facilities in order to free up this prime waterfront land for other development options.

Limited Railroad Crossing — There is only one crossing over the railroad tracks into this district. Since the railroad company is unlikely to grant additional crossings, any development will have to deal with a single point of access into the site.

Opportunities

Location — This district is located adjacent to Stewart Park, the Newman Golf Course, and has potential for access to and views of the water.

Trails — The Cayuga Waterfront Trail runs through this district. This allows for easy walking or biking to Stewart Park, the Ithaca Farmers Market, and other points beyond.

Planned Characteristics

Relocation of City Facilities — The City should consider the relocation of TCAT, Streets and Facilities, and the Fire Training Center to provide additional waterfront land for future development.

Future Development of Water Related/Dependent/Enhanced Uses — This district is an ideal place to encourage development of condos and townhomes, ground floor retail and/or restaurants and other uses that would be enhanced by their location along the waterfront. In addition, water dependent uses, such as boating centers and docks should also be encouraged.

Encourage Public Access — This area should be developed to allow for full public access and enjoyment of the water. Housing communities that restrict public access should

The Newman District is envisioned to be predominantly residential. Do you think there are other uses that should be encouraged in this area? What are other improvements to this area that would enhance public access to the waterfront?
Economic Vitality

Key Economic Development Recommendations

1. Support the creation and expansion of business opportunities, especially those related to tourism.
2. Work on retention of established local businesses and union training programs.
3. Encourage water dependent uses and uses that interface with the waterways.
4. Maintain the Cherry Street District for industries that create employment opportunities.
5. Encourage tourism related businesses to utilize the trail systems as an economic engine.
6. Identify opportunities for development of underutilized waterfront properties.
7. Embrace the unique characteristics of the waterfront area in order to enhance and support businesses.
COMMUNITY LIVABILITY

PUBLIC SAFETY
KEY PUBLIC SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Encourage private developments to contract with private security.
2. Encourage water safety educational opportunities
3. Install water safety infrastructure, including blue light phones, life vests, safety ropes, ladders, lighting and life preservers.
4. Establish an emergency shelter on the west side of the railroad tracks.
5. Work collaboratively with Sheriff, Coast Guard, and Parks Police in order to patrol the waterways.
6. Educate residents and visitors on water safety, safety during flooding, and ice safety.

What other ways can we make our waterfront safer for recreational activities?

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE
KEY PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Increase staffing and resources for maintain physical infrastructure.
2. Upgrade water and sewer capacity to accommodate new development.
3. Consider areas where new roads, sidewalks, and bike lanes may need to be added.
4. Consider a possible 5th Street Extension.

What should be the priorities for public infrastructure upgrades in the wa-

HOUSING
KEY HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Encourage construction of various housing types for all income levels and lifestyles.
2. Look for opportunities to renovate and retain any existing housing
3. Incentivize or require affordable housing units through tax abatements and zoning.
4. Encourage universally designed development that is accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

The plan encourages development of mixed income and mixed housing types. However, single family homes are discouraged. Do you think that this a good way to encourage dense development that still allows for retaining waterfront access?

HISTORIC PRESERVATION
HISTORIC PRESERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Incorporate interpretive signage celebrating the waterfront’s identity and historically significant structures.
2. Conduct intensive-level surveys of identified historic resources to determine the appropriate level of protection for these resources.
3. Draft design guidelines and adopt a form-based code.

The plan encourages and identifies historic structures worthy of further research. Do you agree with this list? Are there other structures that have not been listed? Do you think that any of these structures should be designated as local landmarks?

Historic Resources Worthy of Further Research:
- Thomas-Morse Aircraft Factory
- Delaware, Lackawanna & Western RR Station
- Stanford (Ithaca) Sign Works
- Lehigh Valley House
- Beebe Mission Well House
- Brindley Park Fountain
- Pumping Station on Cherry St.
- Residential Structures
KEY TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Work with Tompkins County Area Transit to ensure there is easily accessible local public transit throughout the entire waterfront area.

2. Include accommodations for pedestrians and bikes on all streets in the waterfront area, including protected bike lanes and complete an off street trail network that connects the entire area.

3. Encourage developers in the waterfront area to work together to develop and implement traffic demand management.

4. Consider locations for shared parking and locations for pedestrian bridges over the water.

5. Encourage private boat ferry or water taxi between Cass Park and the Farmers Market and other areas in the waterfront.

6. Strengthen connections, and trails between the waterfront area, downtown, and between the districts.

7. Work to transform the Route 13 corridor into a complete street, including exploring the possibility of installing a pedestrian island in the center of the roadway to provide an area of refuge for pedestrians.

8. Provide multimodal amenities, such as covered bike shelters with bike pumps, and bus shelters.

9. Consider locations to install traffic circles or other options for managing speed and traffic flow.

10. Work with property owners to provide contiguous sidewalks and tree lawns.

11. Explore options to realign the Cayuga Waterfront Trail to be located directly adjacent to the water and improve signage and trail markings.

12. Look for opportunities to reduce driveway and curb cut widths to ensure proper circulation for the property as well as to ensure pedestrian safety.

Do you think boat ferries and water taxis between waterfront destinations would be widely used?

Are there specific locations that should have crosswalks, sidewalks, other multimodal amenities?
Natural & Cultural Resources

Natural Resources
Key Recommendations

1. Provide ongoing maintenance of waterfront trails, including winter maintenance to ensure accessibility for all residents.
2. Complete the Inlet Island Promenade.
3. Complete the city’s trailheads for the Cayuga Lake Blueways Trail.
4. Identify locations for public boat launches, docks for muscle-powered boats, and boat rentals.
5. Install wayfinding and educational signage to direct residents and visitors to parks, recreational facilities, and to educate them about waterfront ecology.
6. Work with TCAT to provide regular bus service to the waterfront parks throughout the year.
7. Protect the RIPARIAN ZONE immediately adjacent to the water and provide landscaping for wildlife where appropriate.
8. Encourage developers to incorporate green spaces and play areas into new construction projects.
9. Protect views to the waterfront.
10. Implement the park improvements identified in the City of Ithaca Parks & Recreation Master Plan, including park signage, additional lighting, and trail enhancements.

The plan describes the view of the waterfront to be a critical public resource and calls for the City to work with private developers to maintain visual breaks to the water. Do you see this as a critical public asset? Are there other natural resources that should be maintained or preserved?

Cultural Resources
Key Recommendations

1. Support community festivals, particularly those that encourage use of the water or highlight the historic culture of the area and offer winter festivals to increase off-season use of the waterfront.
2. Create interpretive signage and art to celebrate the history of Ithaca’s waterfront and explain the importance of individual historic sites.
3. Install comprehensive wayfinding signage to direct residents and visitors to cultural resources and other key destinations throughout the waterfront area.
4. Involve local businesses in developing a brand for the waterfront that will help identify the area as a cohesive district and celebrate the area’s rich and diverse history.

Are there ideas for cultural events that would highlight Ithaca’s...
Sustainable Energy, Water & Food Systems

Key Energy Recommendations
1. Continue to investigate the feasibility of a microgrid and district energy based at the IAWWTF.
2. Encourage synergistic relationships with neighboring businesses.
3. Consider energy efficiency improvements and the installation of onsite renewable energy sources at City facilities.
4. Provide support for the Ithaca 2030 District and encourage developers and building operators to participate in the District.
5. Ensure compliance of new development with the City’s Green Building Policy.

Key Water Resources and Stormwater Management Recommendations
1. Commence the dredging project as soon as possible and maintain water channels to ensure navigability and flood control.
2. Consider requiring the use and maintenance of pervious surface materials.
3. Encourage the use of green roofs in new development and major renovations.
4. Consider allowing GRAYWATER and rainwater harvesting for use in buildings, landscaping, and for irrigation of the golf course.
5. Explore state of the art technologies to help deal with stormwater runoff, such as pervious pavement and vortex units.
6. Encourage bioswales and other natural means for filtering stormwater runoff along streets, in tree lawns, and as part of sidewalk plans and parking lot landscaping.
7. Identify existing areas that filter stormwater runoff and preserve and enhance that function.
8. Develop a review process to address potential impacts on stormwater runoff caused by the removal of trees and large areas of vegetation.
9. Consider areas where it is feasible or more effective to have shared stormwater facilities.
10. Educate the community on watershed protection and the importance of maintaining a healthy waterfront ecosystem.
11. Discourage any new development from using fertilizers, salts, and other chemicals that may contribute to water pollution and degradation of water quality.

Food Systems Recommendations for the Waterfront Area
1. Support community gardens in all waterfront districts and work with non-profit agencies and private property owners to find suitable locations.
2. Encourage developers to create small gardens, rooftop gardens, and edible landscapes on their properties or set aside land for tenants to do so.
3. Collaborate with TCAT to establish a regular shuttle to the Ithaca Farmers Market from other areas of the city, especially on Sundays.
4. Encourage food production and food processing businesses throughout the waterfront districts.
5. Maintain fishing access to Cayuga Lake and the creeks.