

Schenectady, New York • Stage 1 Report

The results are in!

Find out what Schenectady residents believe would help the city thrive.

Change.org and Mayor McCarthy teamed up to start a conversation that crossed boundaries:

“What do you want for Schenectady?”

Get hundreds of people to share their ideas, and vote on the ideas of others.

Identify their **common interests**, despite differences on other issues.

Bring 100 people together for a conversation about those resonant issues.

Repair sidewalks and add street lights. Improve trash clean up and street maintenance. Target the entrances that welcome visitors, like the corner of State and Brandywine.

Close Central Park Road and Duck Pond Drive to traffic on weekdays and close all Central Park roads to traffic on weekends. Install protected bike lanes on Central Parkway and other major thoroughfares across the city.

More green space and tree canopy now = cooler, healthier and prettier city to come.

In Stage 1, we received **30,459 votes** on

583 IDEAS

from **645 residents.**

n care and mental health care
to improve.

More community gardens for you
children to learn how to grow their
own food.

Help residents use SNAP online grocery purchasing through ordering assistance at city sites and libraries.

Schenectady residents should be able to raise chickens.

Force landlords to maintain their property. All over my neighborhood is nothing but houses with peeling paint, rotted wood, foot-high weeds.

Our analysis identified two main groups of residents based on how they voted

01

Access-Oriented Advocates

This group backs targeted city action on food deserts along with green infrastructure, and a phased full-market-value citywide reassessment. They favor cycling safety, converting vacant commercial space to housing, backyard chickens, and expanded urban vegetation. They also reject added CCTV surveillance and proposals to end equal-opportunity hiring practices.

02

Core Services Traditionalists

What sets this group apart is skepticism on new spending and on reassessment: majorities opposed the citywide full-market-value reassessment, the SNAP produce match and other assistance, preferring that money and attention go to visible basics. Their affirmative agenda is streets and road conditions, forcing landlords to maintain deteriorating properties, and litter control. Like other residents they are in favor of safe community spaces for youth. Although still generally in support, they are less in favor of cycling projects and green infrastructure.

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MAKE OR BREAK

Fund and pursue grants to sustain and extend a dollar-for-dollar SNAP produce match beyond the Greenmarket and county market — to participating corner stores and mobile markets, year-round...

This group: 91%

vs Others: 28%

63% Gap

Food-desert and SNAP programs

Grocery-friendly zoning

Full-market-value reassessment

Cycling, green space and urban agriculture

Existing city hall displays kept

SUPPORTS

More local shops, co-op, shopping, music venues, restaurants, make walking safer, bring in bigger stores 100%

More green space, communal food gardens and more murals. Lives would improve if every home had a garden or access to a garden. 100%

Ensure residents' tax, utility, and housing costs are fair and affordable relative to services received 100%

OPPOSES

Remove the divisive BLM painting in front of city hall. Also stop flying foreign and LGBTQ flags at public/ city government spaces. 95%

I would stop equal opportunity/affirmative action based actions in favor of Merritt based actions. This would create a focus on competence for employees and objective evaluation of everything else. 82%

Install more CCTV cameras to increase public safety and reduce crime. 70%

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MAKE OR BREAK

Conduct a full-market-value citywide reassessment and phase the resulting changes in over five years.

This group: 26%

vs Others: 81%

55% Gap

Safe streets, good sidewalks, and cleanliness first

Opposition to new benefit programs

No citywide reassessment

Landlord accountability and code enforcement

Cool on zoning and bike projects

SUPPORTS

Provide safe community spaces for youth in underserved neighborhoods 100%

Improve street and road conditions across the city 100%

Ensure rental and group housing properties maintain safe, adequate living conditions and protect residents' rights 95%

OPPOSES

Conduct a full-market-value citywide reassessment and phase the resulting changes in over five years. 74%

Fund and pursue grants to sustain and extend a dollar-for-dollar SNAP produce match beyond the Greenmarket and county market — to participating corner stores and mobile markets, year-round... 72%

Help residents use SNAP online grocery purchasing through ordering assistance at city sites and libraries. 58%

Unifying Ideas

These are the ideas all Schenectady residents agreed on, ordered by how important voters indicated they were.*

Implement ranked choice voting in Schenectady City elections so that we can be more open to independent, and 3rd party candidates.

(31.47 Importance Score)**

#1

* All ideas listed meet majority support of all groups identified amongst participants.

** Importance Score is a standardized measure of how strongly voters agree with an idea or goal.

2. While we have all this industry and development, there is no relief of tax burden on residents. Make GE and rivers pay their fair share! **(31.15)**
3. Lower Property tax, it was promised when casino was built. **(30.44)**
4. Fix the roads. Not just patch jobs. **(29.36)**
5. Find a way to lower the property taxes! Way too high in schenectady. Casino needs to pay their fair share, which was promised when city govt was floating the idea to get a casino here. Resale values are low compared to other localities! **(29.30)**
6. Take remove homeless from panhandling on busy intersections. It's unsafe for the drivers and unsafe for the personal panhandling. **(27.59)**
7. Make the streets walking friendly for college kids and families. **(27.23)**
8. Target speeders and others who ignore traffic laws. **(26.91)**
9. Crack down on motorized bikes that are not electric bikes. I see mini bikes and dirt bikes riding up and down the road and sidewalks with no concern for anyone. I see actual road worthy scooters without plates be ridden like they were bikes. **(26.61)**

This helps us to identify the issues that all groups care most about

Food Access - *food that's close enough and cheap enough*

More community gardens for young children to learn how to grow their own food.

✓ 100% bridge

Before adding additional residential spaces downtown, address everyday needs that residents don't have access to: grocery store, pharmacy, hardware store, UPS store, dry cleaner/laundry are all missing from downtown!

✓ 92% bridge

Partner with the Cooperative Extension to plant community garden plots and fruiting trees in median islands: train neighbors to plant & maintain, manage expectations so that everyone understands the crop is to share.

✓ 80% bridge

Getting to Care - *mental health, addiction, and health access*

Address the problems of homelessness, (especially on Albany St. in Hamilton Hill) drugs/addiction, and create jobs and/or apprenticeships for residents of the community.

✓ 100% bridge

Health care and mental health care needs to improve.

✓ 100% bridge

Find program for the homelessness, mental health and people are the street using drugs.

✓ 88% bridge

Crime & Policing - *open drug activity and what policing is for*

Enforce current laws, particularly regarding noise, speeding, litter, zoning.

✓ 94% bridge

I believe laws should be written and enforced regarding property dumping and excessive parked cars in yards. When your city doesn't require minimum standards then neighborhoods lose value and quality of life is devalued.

✓ 93% bridge

Way too many drug addicts especially on State Street makes it unsafe to walk there or waiting for busses because some of these people are out of control. There needs to be a better plan to take care of addicts to get them off the streets

✓ 92% bridge

Parks & Green Space - *parks, playgrounds, and pools*

More green space/ tree canopy now = cooler, healthier and prettier city to come

✓ 100% bridge

We something for our youth to do ,like build a skateboard park,maybe another facility where the kids can go we only have aBoud/Girls club.

✓ 100% bridge

Clean and upgrade our parks, Central Parks lake and pond need cleaning, take the wall down and expand the lake into where the old pool was. Fix the benches. Do something with the building where you use to be able to buy food or ice cream.

✓ 100% bridge

✓ shows cross-group bridging score

Of everything we heard,
Food Access emerged as the topic to talk about next.

- **RELEVANT**

This issue drew broad, cross-group support and, looking across many ideas involving this topic, individual participants signaled it was an important issue for them.

- **ACTIONABLE**

City-controlled levers include the zoning code, permitting regulations, and capital and other investments.

NEXT UP:

Schenectady Civic Dialogue

**We'll gather a sample of residents from all over
the city to talk about **food access.****

If you are interested in participating in the live dialogue, sign
up at cividdialogues.org/schenectady.