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Madison County Among Finalists for \$1.5 million for Canal project

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Wampsville, NY – A proposal by the Madison County Planning Department is among the 7 finalists for the NYS Canals Corporation/New York Power Authority “Reimagine the Canals” Competition. The “Reimagine the Canals” competition sought applications from around the world to apply to reimagine and repurpose the Erie Canal. According to New York State 145 entries were submitted, representing nine states and seven countries.

The Madison County Planning Department submitted a proposal for “[Canalside Pocket Neighborhoods](#)” with a pilot project in the Village of Canastota. This project would create canal-side pocket neighborhoods that would take advantage of the Erie Canal and its Trailway. Homes would surround a common greenspace and have direct access to the Canal. It would be walkable to shopping, restaurants and other amenities.

All seven teams that were selected as finalists received \$50,000 to move forward with Phase 2. Under Phase 2, the teams have 3 months to develop their ideas further and then resubmit them. That was done this past July. With the funds, Madison County Planning Department hired Stream Architecture out of Ithaca to design the pilot canalside pocket neighborhood in Canastota. They also hired Camoin Associates to do a housing market analysis for Canastota to help inform price points and market demand for the project. A video of the proposal can be found here <https://youtu.be/qWzd1QArpRU>.

“We are excited that our project was chosen to be one of the seven finalists,” said Jamie Kowalczk, Assistant Director of the Madison County Planning Department. “The Erie Canal has shifted over the last 200 years from an industrial use to a recreational use. At the same time, an increasing amount of people are looking to live in walkable communities with amenities such as young professionals and seniors. Living along the canal offers the opportunity to have a waterway and trail system right out your front door. This also helps canal-side communities repurpose vacant or underutilized sites and attract people back to their downtowns.”

Each team is anxiously awaiting the October 3, 2018 announcement of which plans will be chosen to receive up to \$1.5 million for implementation. The announcement will be made in Rochester, and the Madison County Planning Department hopes that it will be bringing up to \$1.5 million dollars back to Canastota to redevelop a site along the canal into a new neighborhood. NYS Canals/NYPA is looking for public feedback on all seven projects.

For more information visit: www.canals.ny.gov/reimagine/neighbourhood.html.

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