City of Amsterdam Community Needs Assessment

Community Survey

We need your help to improve the City of Amsterdam!

Tell us what your neighborhood needs . . . Tell us what services you and your family need . . .
Tell us what Amsterdam's economy needs . . .Tell us what improvements will make our City more livable .

INTRODUCTION

The City of Amsterdam, in conjunction with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is conducting a Community Needs Assessment to identify its priority needs and opportunities for the next 2-5 years. The information generated from this survey will be used not only by the City and HUD to craft a two year action plan for targeting federal assets to help the City, it will also serve as a basis for revising the City's Comprehensive Plan (and thereby much reducing the cost of such an update).

This survey should take you about 15-20 minutes to complete. **All responses are anonymous and every response received before August 10th, 2015 will be noted and considered.** Summarized results will be released to the public, but individual responses will not available to anyone.

If you prefer, you may complete this survey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RWSNJWK

Hard copy responses can be dropped off at the same location additional copies of the survey are available: City Hall, Amsterdam Free Library, The Inman Senior Center, Centro Civico, and other places around the City. Or they may be mailed to: City Hall, ATTN: DCED, 61 Church Street, Amsterdam NY 12010. Additional downloadable hard copies can be printed from the City website – www.amsterdamny.gov.

The questions herein were generated from many sources: the last comprehensive plan, other planning documents, but most recently and importantly, a series of brainstorming and roundtable discussion in which nearly a hundred of your fellow citizens put forth what they thought Amsterdam needed.

If you have any questions about anything on the survey you are encouraged to stop and call the Director, Community and Economic Development at (518) 841-4323 or email rvonhasseln@amsterdamny.gov for an explanation before you complete it.

Thank you for giving your time and thoughts to building a better City! We need and appreciate it!

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PART I – GENERAL

1. In one word, what do you think is Amsterdam's *number one* priority need? _____

2. In one word, what is Amsterdam's greatest barrier to meeting that need? _____

3. Which of the following do you feel are the most important?

GOALS	DO NOT NEED	LOW NEED	MEDIUM NEED	HIGH NEED
Improve Image and Identity In Region				
Rebuild Economic Foundation				
Reestablish Downtown as Community Center				
Stabilize and Strengthen Neighborhoods				
Redevelop Old Mill Sites				
Enhance Important Gateways				
Create a City Greenway System				
Other:				
Other:				

4. Which of the following venues/activities in Amsterdam do you enjoy? *(Check all that appl*

☐ Run / Walk / Bike ☐ Theaters ☐ Street Festivals / Fairs ☐ Retail / Shopping
☐ Restaurants / Cafes ☐ Museums ☐ City Parks System ☐ Youth Activities
☐ Sports Venues ☐ Other (specify) _____

5. Do you volunteer in Amsterdam? ☐ I would like to become a volunteer ☐ I don't volunteer

☐ I already volunteer (Organization / Location) _____

6. What charities are you most interested in? _____

7. What *geographic area(s)* in Amsterdam have the greatest need?

☐ East End ☐ West End ☐ South Side ☐ Market Hill ☐ Reid Hill
☐ Downtown ☐ Upper Church Street ☐ Other (specify) _____

8. What is the one thing would you do *first* to improve the City of Amsterdam?

_____

9. What is one thing that would most improve *your q*uality of life in Amsterdam?

_____

10. List three (3) words that best describe Amsterdam as it is *now*: _____ , _____, _____

11. List three (3) words that best describe Amsterdam as it *could be*: _____ , _____, _____

PART II – PUBLIC SERVICES USED

12. During the past year, have you used any of the following public services in Amsterdam, and how would you rate your experience? (*Please check all that apply in either the positive or negative experience column: if you did not use, please check that column)*

PUBLIC SERVICES YOU HAVE USED WITHIN THE PAST YEAR	DID NOT USE	USED POSITIVE EXPERIENCE	USED NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE
Senior Services			
Youth Services			
Public Transportation			
Affordable Housing Services			
City-Sponsored Recreational Programs			
Employment Programs			
Food Programs/Community Meal Services			
Subsidized Healthcare			
Subsidized Childcare			
Mental Health or Substance Abuse Services			
Other:			
Other:			

PART III – TRANSPORTATION

13. What do you think are Amsterdam's priority Transportation needs?

TRANSPORTATION NEEDS	DO NOT NEED	LOW NEED	MEDIUM NEED	HIGH NEED
Build Bike Lanes and Signage				
Install Bike Racks at Key Places				
Better Maintenance of Bike/Hike Ways				
Assist Owners in Sidewalk Repair				
Install Sidewalks Where There Are None				
Integrate City Buses with Regional System				
Regular Times and Stops for City Buses				
Inspect Taxi Services				
Relocate Train Station to Downtown				
Make Train Station Intermodal				
Other:				
Other:				

PART IV – FOOD

14. What do you think are Amsterdam's priority Food needs?

FOOD NEEDS	DO NOT NEED	LOW NEED	MEDIUM NEED	HIGH NEED
Create New Food Pantry/Free Meal Locations				
Expand Senior Food Programs				
Establish Community Gardens/Urban Agriculture				
Form a Volunteer Food Council				

Increase Farm-to-Fork Options				
Seek Small and Mid-Sized Grocery Stores in City				
Develop a Food Service Business incubator				
Promote Small Diverse Restaurants				
Work with Schools on Healthy Food Options				
Work with Others to Expand Nutritional Knowledge				
Other:				
Other:				

PART V – EDUCATION

15. What do think are Amsterdam's priority Education needs?

EDUCATION NEEDS	DO NOT NEED	LOW NEED	MEDIUM NEED	HIGH NEED
Increase Workforce Soft Skills Training				
Pre-K Schooling				
Increase Vocational Training				
Increase Project Based Learning (PTECH)				
Draft City/School Long Term Coordination Plan				
Actively Attempt to Change Outside Perceptions				
Promote Additional Use of Arts Center				
Teach Homeownership in Local Schools				
Parent Education Outreach				
Increase Community Engagement				
Other:				
Other:				

PART VI – MARKETING

16. What do you think are Amsterdam's priority Marketing needs?

MARKETING NEEDS	DO NOT NEED	LOW NEED	MEDIUM NEED	HIGH NEED
Promote the Golf Course More				
Improve Ties to the Capital Region				
Market to Specific Industries/Commercial Groups				
Publish an Inventory of Good Available Properties				
Increase Heritage Tourism				
Create/Promote Year-Round/Winter Activities				
Create/Promote Additional Waterfront Activities				
Create a Low Tech/Small Business Incubator				
Promote Historic Preservation Tax Credit Options				
Promote HUB Zone Program				
Other:				
Other:				

PART VII – HOUSING

17. What do you think are Amsterdam's priority Housing needs?

HOUSING NEEDS	DO NOT NEED	LOW NEED	MEDIUM NEED	HIGH NEED
Large Single Room Occupancy Facility				
Affordable Housing				
Market Rate Housing				
Condos/Townhouses				
Mixed Use Housing				
Transitional Housing				
Expanded/Year-Round Homeless Shelter				
Downtown Apartments Over Retail				
Veterans Housing				
Senior Housing				
Other:				
Other:				

PART VIII - REVITALIZATION

18. What do you think are Amsterdam's priority Revitalization needs?

REVITALIZATION NEEDS	DO NOT NEED	LOW NEED	MEDIUM NEED	HIGH NEED
Increase Waterfront Access/Activities				
Historic Preservation Incentives				
Improved/Increased Code Enforcement				
Prevent the Spread of Blighted Properties				
Build an Attractive Downtown Core				
Simplified Zoning/Planning/Code Procedures				
Grow the Land Bank				
Redevelop Old Mill Sites				
East End Redevelopment				
Develop Additional Cultural/Recreational Draws				
Other:				
Other:				

PART IX – PUBLIC SERVICES NEEDED

19. Which public services are needed most by Amsterdam residents?

PUBLIC SERVICES NEEDED	DO NOT NEED	LOW NEED	MEDIUM NEED	HIGH NEED
Safe and Reliable Childcare				
Crime Prevention/Awareness Programs				
Housing with Support Services				
Healthcare Services				
Mental Health Services				
Substance Abuse Services				
Senior Services				
Abused & Neglected Children Services				
Domestic Abuse Services				

Youth Services				
Literacy Programs				
English as a Second Language				
Veterans Services				
Transportation Services				
Services for Persons with Disabilities				
Other:				
Other:				

PART X – INITIATIVES FOR HOMEOWNERS, LANDLORDS, and TENANTS

20. Which initiatives would best help Amsterdam Homeowners, Landlords and Tenants?

HOMEOWNER, LANDLORD, and TENANT IINITIATIVES	DO NOT NEED	LOW NEED	MEDIUM NEED	HIGH NEED
Weatherization, Lead, Asbestos Assistance				
Housing Rehabilitation Incentives/Grants				
Homeownership Incentives				
Accessibility Assistance				
Energy Efficiency Programs				
Landlord Tenant Association(s)				
1st Time Home Owner Education				
Incentives to Rent to Special Needs Persons				
Help for Seniors to Stay in Own Homes Longer				
Homesteading Programs				
Other:				
Other:				

PART XI – NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVES

21. Which Neighborhood Initiatives would best help *your* neighborhood?

NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVES	DO NOT NEED	LOW NEED	MEDIUM NEED	HIGH NEED
Neighborhood Association				
Off-Street Parking				
Safe Sidewalks and Walkable Streets				
Neighborhood Parks and Greenspaces				
Homeownership Incentives				
Bus Stops and Public Transportation				
Community Policing and Crime Prevention				
Absentee Landlord and Slumlord Penalties				
Re-use or Demolition of Vacant Properties				
Food Access				
Tree Planting				
Flood Prevention and Drainage				
Enhanced Street Lighting				
Other:				
Other:				

PART XII – DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT

22. Which initiatives would best help redevelop the Downtown area?

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT	DO NOT NEED	LOW NEED	MEDIUM NEED	HIGH NEED
Upper Floor Housing Incentives				
Commercial Façade Improvements				
Microbrewery				
"Nightlife"/Entertainment/Dining				
Streetscape Improvements				
Sports/Recreation/Street Events				
Farmers Market				
Niche Market/Destination Stores				
Tree Planting				
Public WIFI/Internet Service				
Improved/Expanded Parking				
Public Art				
Downtown Merchants Association				
Other:				
Other:				

PART XIII – PUBLIC FACILITIES and AMENITIES

23. Which facilities would most benefit Amsterdam?

PUBLIC FACILITIES and AMENITIES	DO NOT NEED	LOW NEED	MEDIUM NEED	HIGH NEED
Additional Parking Facilities				
Expanded City Recreational Center				
Visitor Center				
Regional Sports /Tournament Facility				
Outdoor Theater				
Indoor Theater(s)				
Marina				
Antiques Center				
Artist Work/Live Space				
Large Event/Catering Venue				
New Commercial/Industrial Space				
Improved/Expanded Trails/Nature Preserves				
Windmill				
Other:				
Other:				

PART XIV – STUDENTS *(Omit this part if you are not a student)*

24. Do you plan on making Amsterdam your home upon graduating from high school/college (*if applicable*)?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Undecided

25. If the answer to Question 24 was "Yes" please explain why: _____

26. If the answer to Question 24 was "No' or "Undecided," what could change in the City of Amsterdam that would encourage you to stay? _____

27. If offered tuition incentives at a local college, would you agree to live & work in Amsterdam for the next five years upon graduation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

28. Would you consider living in Amsterdam if there was a program to partially pay for your student loans in exchange for renting or owning a home in the City?

☐ Yes ☐ No

29. Would childcare be a priority for you to work/study in Amsterdam?

☐ Yes ☐ No

30. If entrepreneurial/start-up assistance was available, would you be interested in starting a business in Amsterdam?

☐ Yes ☐ No

PART XV – BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In order to ensure that we have heard from all parts of our community, please answer the following questions about yourself. Sharing this information is up to you, and your individual identity will not be associated with your responses in any way.

31. What is your zip code? ☐ 12010 ☐ Other: _____

32. What is your Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other ☐ Prefer not to share

33. What is your Race/Ethnicity? *(Please check **one**)*

☐ White
☐ Black
☐ Asian
☐ North American Indian
☐ Pacific Islander
☐ Two or More Races
☐ Prefer not to share

34. Are you Hispanic or Latino? *(Please check **one**)*

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Prefer not to share

35. What is your age? (*Please check **one***)

☐ Under 14 ☐ 14-17 ☐ 18-21 ☐ 22-24 ☐ 25-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ 46-55
☐ 56 -65 ☐ 66-75 ☐ Over 75 ☐ Prefer not to share

36. What is your highest education? *(Please check **one**)*

- ☐ Not a High School Graduate
- ☐ High School Grad or Equal
- ☐ Some College
- ☐ Associate Degree
- ☐ Bachelor Degree
- ☐ Post Grad or Professional Degree
- ☐ Prefer not to share

37. Which of the following represents you best? (*Please check **all** that apply*)

- ☐ City Resident
- ☐ High School Student
- ☐ College Undergraduate Student
- ☐ College Graduate Student
- ☐ Entrepreneur/Local Business Owner
- ☐ Intern
- ☐ Part-time/Seasonal Employee
- ☐ Full-time Employee
- ☐ Work/Study in Amsterdam; reside outside the City
- ☐ Government Employee
- ☐ Non-Profit Employee
- ☐ Affordable Housing Provider
- ☐ Other (specify) _____

38. If you reside in the City, what best describes your residence? *(Please check **one**)*

- ☐ Single Family Residence
- ☐ Two family Residence
- ☐ Multi-Family Residence
- ☐ Apartment Building
- ☐ Group Home or Quarters (Nursing, Senior, etc.)
- ☐ Other (specify) : _____
- ☐ Prefer not to share

39. If you reside in the City, do you rent or own your residence? *(Please check **one**)*

- ☐ Rent
- ☐ Own
- ☐ Other (specify): _____
- ☐ Prefer not to share

40. If you reside in the City, in which ward do you live? *(Please check one)*

- ☐ First Ward
- ☐ Second Ward
- ☐ Third Ward
- ☐ Fourth Ward
- ☐ Fifth Ward
- ☐ I don't Know

41. What *geographic area* in Amsterdam do you live in?

☐ East End ☐ West End ☐ South Side ☐ Market Hill ☐ Reid Hill

☐ Downtown ☐ Upper Church Street ☐ Other (specify) _____

42. How many persons (including you) are in your household? (*Please check **one***)

- ☐ One
- ☐ Two
- ☐ Three
- ☐ Four
- ☐ Five
- ☐ Six
- ☐ More than Six
- ☐ Prefer Not to Share

43. What is your annual household income? (*Please check **one***)

- ☐ Prefer Not to Share
- ☐ Not Sure
- ☐ Less than $20,000
- ☐ $20,000 - $29,999
- ☐ $30,000 - $39,999
- ☐ $40,000 - $49,999
- ☐ $50,000 - $59,999
- ☐ $60,000 - $69,999
- ☐ $70,000 - $79,999
- ☐ $80,000 or More

44. How often do you use public transportation? *(Please check **one**)*

☐ Most days ☐ More than once a week ☐ More than once a month ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

45. How many vehicles does your household have? *(Please check **one**)*

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ More than 3

46. Have you participated in a local planning effort before? *(Please check **one**)*

☐ This is my first time
☐ Sometimes
☐ Frequently
☐ I've sat on a committee or board
☐ Prefer not to share

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. If you have any additional comments you'd like to add or contribute, please include them below, or attach an additional sheet.

47. Additional Comments

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Please note that your answers are anonymous and every comment will be considered and noted.

If you would like to stay involved with this or other planning public participation activities, please call or email the Director of Community and Economic Development, City of Amsterdam at (518) 841-4323 or rvonhasseln@amsterdamny.gov.

Thank you for your participation!