

UCTC City of Kingston Intermodal Facility Facility Site Location & Conceptual Design Analysis

Final Report

MARKET OVERVIEW

City of Kingston, Ulster County, and the Hudson Valley

A location of political and economic import for many of its 350 years, the City of Kingston in upstate New York possesses a storied and venerable history. Its proximity to the wealth and power of New York City, together with its strategic position at the convergence of Rondout Creek and the Hudson River, not only fated Kingston to become a major player in the American Revolution, but also predisposed the city to the role of "transportation hub" through the close of the 19th century. When transportation technologies shifted away from water towards rail, the city struggled to retain its transportation stronghold, and thus, its livelihood. In the adaptive years that followed, Kingston, Ulster County, and the entire Hudson River Valley were forced to forge new and unique niches in a rapidly changing economy. Today, their largely-interdependent economies have rebounded, and are posed to make even greater economic strides in the years and decades to come.

Historic Background

The story of Kingston begins in 1609, the year Dutch East India Company representative Henry Hudson became the earliest-documented European to reach New York Harbor and subsequently sail the waterway now known as the Hudson River. Casting an entrepreneurial eye on the unmarred valley stretching north to present-day Albany, Hudson claimed his discovery in the name of his Dutch sponsors.

In the decades that followed, the Dutch invested significant resources in the settlement of New Netherland, the name given to their newly-acquired territory. By 1626, they had formally established Fort Orange (at present-day Albany) and New Amsterdam (in present-day lower Manhattan). Because of the latter's deep, freeze-resistant waterways and protected bays, the settlement was particularly well-suited to trade, and commerce rather than agriculture evolved as the colony's primary industry. The Dutch found early success in the fur trade, while later enterprises in timber, tobacco, and the sale of slaves brought them extraordinary wealth.

In time, the Dutch gradually spread across the Hudson Valley. By 1652, approximately 70 families left Fort Orange to farm the flood plains a few miles from the junction of Rondout Creek and the Hudson River. By 1657, regular skirmishes between the Rondout settlers and the neighboring Esopus Indians led Dutch Director General Peter Stuyvesant to order the small settlement to move within the confines of a stockade on a hill overlooking the farmland. The village, which Stuyvesant called Wiltwyck, would later be given the name Kingston in 1669.

In 1664, shortly after Wiltwyck's (Kingston's) foundation, the Dutch lost their North American territory to the British in the Second Anglo-Dutch War. For the next century, the region gradually anglicized, before governance changed hands again as a result of the American Revolution. It was during the tumult of that era that Kingston emerged as

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a city of major regional significance—first as the site of ratification of the New York State Constitution, and second as the state’s original capital. In 1777, the British burned the city to the ground as retribution for its role as host to the treasonous patriot government.

Following the devastating fire, Kingston was forced to rebuild the prominence it had enjoyed in the colonial era. Within a few decades, the area would not only match but surpass its former glory; capitalizing on the adjacency of the Hudson River to establish itself as a key link in the transport of goods and materials between metropolitan New York and the west.

The Role of Transportation

The 19th Century ushered in an era of monumental change that affected not only Kingston but the greater western world. The Industrial Revolution had taken hold, forging connections between once distinct, local economies and spurring the demand for both raw materials and finished goods in unprecedented quantities. Fulfillment of that demand drove technological innovation in agriculture, manufacturing, and, most significantly to Kingston, transportation. In 1807, Robert Fulton made history with the introduction of the first steamboat, thereby providing the world with a reliable mode of countercurrent transportation. With the ability to travel both up and down stream, steamboats became the shipping method of choice, and riverside municipalities, like Kingston, reaped tremendous benefits.

It was at this time that the area that comprises modern-day Kingston was actually two distinct townships—the village of Kingston, located on the site of the original Dutch stockade, and Rondout, an unassuming hamlet along the creek of the same name. Despite its humble appearance, enterprising industrialists were quick to recognize Rondout’s favorable position along the Hudson. In the 1820’s, Pennsylvania coal mine owners William and Maurice Wurts selected the tiny village as terminal port for their private shipping venture, the Delaware and Hudson Canal.

By the time the canal opened in 1828, Rondout’s transformation was already underway. The construction process, which had begun three years prior, had inundated the area with new residents and businesses—an initial growth spurt that the fully-functional canal managed to perpetuate. By 1840, Rondout boasted 1,500 residents. In 1855, a mere 15 years later, its population had reached 6,000.

With its newly-developed infrastructure, Rondout was able to expand its economy beyond the canal to support successful cement, bluestone, brick-making, and patent-medicine industries, while nearby Kingston furnished the businesses and citizens of Rondout with vital banking and professional services. In 1872, after decades of this codependency, the two towns were incorporated as one, City of Kingston.

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Unified, Kingston flourished as a transportation and commercial hub until the closing of the Delaware and Hudson in 1899, when transport by rail finally supplanted canal shipping. At the same time, Portland cement was introduced to the market, squelching demand for both the local Rondout variety and bluestone. With its principal industries no longer in tact, and the outmoded status of canal shipping, Kingston, as well as other Hudson Valley communities, lost their commercial significance.

Kingston's inability to keep pace with advancing transportation technologies ultimately led to its decline, consequently forcing the city to reassess and rebuild its economy. As evidenced by the subsequent report, both the City of Kingston and the surrounding Hudson Valley have since managed to capitalize and build on their remaining assets. Furthermore, many local and regional developments are underway that show promise in their ability to drive growth into the future.

State of the Economy

Today, both Ulster County and the Hudson Valley are viable places to live, work, and conduct business. Both residents and business owners benefit from a high quality of life and proximity to urban centers at Albany and New York, which are accessible by CSX freight lines as well as passenger rail service via Metro-North and Amtrak in Dutchess and Orange Counties.

In recent years, the regional economy has grown, albeit modestly. Between 2001 and 2005, GDP in the Poughkeepsie-Newburgh metropolitan statistical area increased 3.8%—considerably more than the national average. In the same timeframe, the Kingston area GDP grew to \$3.68 billion, an increase of 2.8%. Top contributors included government (\$666 million), retail (\$484 million), healthcare and social assistance (\$401 million), and manufacturing (\$344 million).

Similarly promising, the U.S. Department of Commerce reported that total export sales from the Kingston Metropolitan Area increased 40% in 2006, amounting to \$160.28 million. Electronic exports accounted for \$9.8 million of that total, up from \$5.3 million the previous year. Experts attribute the growth to a number of factors, including the weak dollar, the region's tendency to produce inimitable technological products, and efforts by organization such as Empire State Development Corp. and Albany Center for Economic Growth to assist local companies in marketing their products overseas.

According to a June 2008 Marist report, the 2007 average annual unemployment rate for the Hudson Valley was 3.82%, a decline of 1.8% from 2006. Average annual unemployment was slightly higher in Ulster County—approximately 4.05% in 2007—but still significantly lower than the state (4.54%) and national averages (4.63%) for the same year. Between March and July 2008, the national unemployment rate averaged 5.36%, hitting a four-year high in July (5.7%). In the same time frame, the unemployment rate for the Hudson Valley averaged 4.74%, never exceeding 5.1%. These data suggest,

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perhaps optimistically, that the region may not be as susceptible to the effects of a downturn economy as the rest of the country.

In 2008, 40% of Ulster County employers reported plans to add staff for the summer quarter, primarily in the construction, trade, transportation, services, and public sectors; only 3% reported plans to make any staffing cuts. Still, the growing labor force has outpaced job creation, producing a situation in which increasing numbers of residents must travel outside the region to find employment. In 2006, the number of residents working outside their county of residence increased by 8,900 to a total of 296,000. Thirty-three percent of the Ulster County labor force was included among this group.

For residents of the Hudson Valley's southernmost counties, this trend has generally meant seeking employment in the New York metropolitan area. In 2006, net earnings of Hudson Valley residents increased 5.95% to \$82.8 billion, growth that may be attributable, at least in part, to the higher salaries residents are importing from New York City. At the same time, costs of living and housing have also climbed, somewhat negating the benefits of the earnings increase.

Projected Growth

In the long-term, multiple sources anticipate growth in both Ulster County and the greater Hudson Valley. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that Ulster County's population grew to 182,742 in 2006—up from 177,749 in 2000. Meanwhile, New York State Statistical Information System projects continued growth through at least 2025, when the population is estimated to reach 210,096, with individuals under 40 years of age representing 52% of that total (up from 45% in 2005). For the mid-Hudson Valley as a whole, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council estimates the population will increase from 2,239,200 in 2010 to 2,484,900 in 2025.

Employment numbers are equally promising. The New York State Department of Labor projects total employment in the Hudson Valley will increase from 990,040 in 2004 to 1,077,560 by 2014, with an average of 8,750 job openings resulting from industry growth each year.

According to an independent study prepared by The Pathfinders in January 2006, the Ulster County labor shed, comprised of Ulster, Delaware, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, and Sullivan Counties, boasts an underemployed labor force of 32,600 individuals. By definition, these individuals have jobs, but desire and qualify for better positions than they currently hold, and thus serve as the primary demographic from which a new employer to the area would hire its staff. Additional characteristics of the Ulster County underemployed are summarized as follows:

- 33% fall within the 35-44 age bracket (the most-represented age group)
- 53% hold an Associate Degree or higher; only 2% have not graduated high school

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- Most have experience in office operations (79%), sales (56%), and/or management (51%)
- Almost half (49%) have experience in distribution/transportation
- Large percentages have experience in manufacturing (38%), medical science (35%), and/or telecommunication/information technology

Additionally, a new employer would also have at its disposal a pool of 16,400 unemployed individuals who are not actively seeking work but would consider accepting a position under the right circumstances. When unemployed individuals actively seeking work are also factored into the equation, the Ulster County labor shed presents a total of 70,200 available workers to prospective employers.

Stewart Airport

Like the ready and able underemployed workforce, Stewart Airport in Orange County represents another marketable regional asset. Centrally located in New Windsor, NY, less than 25 miles from Ulster County, 60 miles north of New York City, and within a 250-mile radius of Boston, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Baltimore, Montreal, Buffalo, and Toronto, Stewart has been identified as the next major hub in the overburdened tri-state aviation market.

Interest in the historically underutilized airport has grown tremendously in recent years. Between 2006 and 2007, passenger traffic increased 300% -- a surge largely attributable to the arrival of carriers JetBlue, AirTran, and Delta Connection. On November 1, 2007, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey assumed control of Stewart through a 93-year, \$87.5 million lease agreement with National Express Group. Having earmarked an additional \$500 million for capital projects over the next ten years, the Port Authority plans to transform Stewart into a facility capable of relieving growing congestion at John F. Kennedy, LaGuardia, and Newark airports. It's a plan that should prove favorable among the 11 million of the 108 million tri-state travelers who live closer to Stewart than any one of the existing three hubs.

Since acquisition, the Authority has embarked on a campaign to attract additional airlines, offer expanded routes; improve parking, access, and amenities; and market the airport to consumers. William DeCota, Director of Aviation, believes the airport has the potential to serve nearly 3 million travelers within five years, drawing mostly from Rockland, Orange, Westchester, Putnam, Sullivan and Ulster Counties, as well as parts of New Jersey and Connecticut.

Officials also have plans to expand cargo service at Stewart. With more surface area to facilitate the unloading process, and less surrounding road congestion than the other airports, cargo passing through Stewart can more quickly reach its final destination. Moreover, a \$55 million road project completed in 2007 has made access from the airport to the region's two major highways—the east-west I-84 and the north-south thruway—that much more efficient. As business leaders become more aware of

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Stewart's facilities, and as the Authority continues to improve cargo capacity, the area will undoubtedly become an increasingly attractive place to do business.

Indeed, developers have already begun acting on the potentially lucrative opportunities made possible by Stewart's fledgling renaissance. First Columbia, LLC has commenced its ambitious master plan to build New York International Plaza—a state-of-the-art business campus on a 260-acre, airport-adjacent plot. At completion, the campus will boast over 2 million square feet of retail, residential housing, hotel units, fitness and health facilities, and commercial office space.

First Columbia is confident that the Plaza's strategic location, and the host of tax breaks that accompany its inclusion within both a New York State Empire Zone and federal Foreign Trade Zone, will serve as attractive incentives to prospective occupants. Certainly, as Stewart Airport continues to grow, and as other transportation options expand, the Hudson Valley can be more convincingly marketed to industries and businesses seeking a feasible, affordable base of operations.

Solar Technology

Solar technology is one industry already making use of the Hudson Valley's growing assets, thanks in large part to ongoing efforts by lawmakers looking to brand the region as a leader in solar technology research and development. In 2007, Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-N.Y.) helped secure more than \$5 million in local, state, and federal funding to launch The Solar Energy Consortium (TSEC), a non-profit organization based in Ulster County that allies the state's manufacturing, financial, and research communities for the purpose of advancing photovoltaic technology.

In July 2008, the House Appropriation Committee's approved another \$2.9 million for TSEC and its partners as part of the 2009 Financial Service Appropriations bill. This funding is in addition to the \$6.5 million recently allotted the consortium by New York State, as well as \$200,000 promised by Ulster County.

The money granted by the County comes with certain stipulations to ensure that Ulster's interests are being met. Additionally, a portion of the federal funds, approximately \$1.5 million, has been earmarked for Prism Technologies, Inc. to commence the development and manufacture of holographic optical film technology and photovoltaic modules at their Ulster County facility, a move that promises to create 400 jobs in the County over the next five years. Efforts by the consortium as a whole are expected to generate more than 1,000 jobs statewide in the same timeframe.

Frank Falatyn, Vice President of TSEC, has reported plans of the consortium to develop solar panels that can be retrofitted to New York City's existing skyscrapers. If the project is successful, future plans may include exporting the technology to serve the dense urban communities of countries like China.

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Undoubtedly, the industry is making significant progress and will likely continue to do well as it continues to receive support, and as demand grows for alternative and renewable sources of energy. As Hinchey put it, "By investing in The Solar Energy Consortium now, we are taking the steps necessary to create hundreds then thousands of new jobs in upstate New York over the course of the next several years while ensuring that New York is front and center in the world of renewable energy." As home to TSEC, Prism Technologies, and other consortium partners, the Hudson Valley stands to gain from this projected growth.

Tourism

Likewise important to Kingston and Ulster County's economic growth will be the ongoing vitality of area tourism. According to independent research firm Tourism Economics, the Catskills (defined by the tourism industry as Ulster, Delaware, Greene, and Sullivan Counties) and the Hudson Valley (Columbia, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, and Westchester Counties) together comprised 8% of the state's direct tourism sales in 2006—a respectable number considering the skewing effect of New York City on total sales. In the Catskills, that amounted to \$9.6 million in expenditures, 46% of which was generated by visitors to Ulster County. In the Hudson Valley, spending exceeded \$2.9 billion—a 4% increase from the previous year. Additional findings from the firm's December 2007 report are summarized as follows:

- Tourism in Ulster County generates \$227 million in labor income—50% of the regional total.
- Tourism directly supports 6,377 and 13,284 jobs in Ulster County and the greater Catskills region respectively.
- In the Hudson Valley, tourism supports 37,113 jobs and produces \$942 million in labor income.
- The food and beverage (26%) and transportation (24%) sectors account for the largest percentages of direct tourism sales in the Hudson Valley.

A separate study, released the same month by Hall & Partners for Saatchi & Saatchi and Empire State Development, profiles the tourism industry in both the Catskills and Hudson Valley regions. In summary, the report concludes:

- Visitors to both regions are likely to hail from the New York City metro region, fall within a younger (25-49) age bracket, and earn more than \$75,000 per year.
- Trips to the Catskills generally last longer than a weekend, but less than a week
- Sixty-one percent of those who have traveled to the Hudson Valley have also visited the Catskills.
- Tourists most often cite the Catskills' historic sites and landmarks (61%); outdoor adventure opportunities (43%), art and culture opportunities (29%), and farm activities (18%) or the availability of locally-produced foods (14%) as primary reasons for their visit.

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- Hudson Valley tourists cite the same motivating factors in similar quantities: historic sites (60%); outdoor adventure (41%); arts and culture (23%); farm activities (14%).
- Thirty-three percent of tourists to the Catskills consider the ease and convenience of getting to the region a critical factor in their choice to visit; forty-one percent say the same of the Hudson Valley.

Historic Sites

As the above data indicate, approximately 60% of people who travel to either the Catskills or the Hudson Valley consider the regions' wealth of historic sites and other regional landmarks critical factors in their decision to visit. Given that Kingston has maintained numerous vestiges of its 350 year history, the city has and does benefit economically from its regional role as a key tourist attraction. As the city persists in its cooperative efforts to market historical tourism, the dividends will likely continue to pay into the future.

Since 1966, the City of Kingston has gone to great lengths to preserve and market its historical heritage, an initiative that included the designation of a total of four historic districts by 1995. The Stockade District, at the site of the original Stuyvesant-mandated Dutch settlement, was the first recognized, followed in succession by Rondout-West Strand, Chestnut Street, and Fair Street. Boasting authentic historic structures and, in some cases, original street plans, each district serves as picturesque architectural testimony to a specific and significant moment in Kingston's historic evolution.

In the early 1980's, Kingston was designated one of New York State's sixteen Urban Cultural Parks/Heritage Areas, a state program designed to promote tourism through the presentation of important historical sites in the context of the city's former role as a transportation hub. The resulting boost in tourism and related commerce Kingston experienced upon participation contributed to its subsequent revitalization. Recognizing an opportunity at hand, developers and business owners worked to bring residential and commercial activity back to long-abandoned historic urban districts. In time, Kingston emerged a reenergized and desirable place to live and work.

Today, historic tourism remains a focus of the city's economic strategy. Recently, Kingston became the first community to create an online travel itinerary in conjunction with the National Register of Historic Places. Entitled "Kingston: 300 years of New York History," the itinerary is designed to encourage tourism by supplying potential and pending visitors with a wealth of information regarding the significance and accessibility of the many historic sites the city has to offer.

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Outdoor Adventure: Belleayre Mountain Development Plan

Presently, 43% of visitors travel to the Catskills (including Ulster County) to indulge in some form of outdoor recreation. In fact, the region might be described as outdoor enthusiast's mecca. One attraction that promises to draw an even larger share of the market once completed is the construction of a world-class private resort at Catskill Park on the border of Ulster and Delaware Counties. The developers, Crossroad Ventures, L.L.C., have designed a state-of-the-art, year-round hospitality complex built to LEED Silver standards, with the goal of reclaiming the mountains' glory as a premier tourist destination. Planned amenities include:

- The Highmount Hotel & Spa, featuring 240 units of five-star, luxury accommodations and upscale leisure and medical spa facilities
- The Wildacres Hotel, featuring 389 units of four-star, family accommodations and conference space
- An 18-hole golf course designed by Davis Love III
- Resort and recreational programming for every season by way of the Wilderness Activity Center and Wildacres Resort Center
- Several restaurants and retail shops
- The expansion of Belleayre Mountain Ski Center terrain, to include more advanced-level trails
- Ski-in, ski-out convenience

Reports indicate that demand for the new facilities is high. Since 1998, annual visits to the existing Belleayre Mountain Ski Center have increased from 74,000 to 146,000—a number that is projected to grow by an additional 104,000 skiers once advanced-level terrain is acquired. The proposed complex will be equipped to accommodate these additional visitors and will encourage extended stays with its diverse activities roster. The facilities will also prove appealing to New Yorkers seeking an alternative to comparable destinations in New England. In milder months, the resort's primary draw will be its outdoor adventure activities (hiking, nature walks, mountain biking, and horseback riding) and golf and spa facilities. Spas, in particular, are a growing and profitable segment of the hospitality industry. In 2006, spas generated \$9.4 billion in revenue, up 34% from 2003.

As soon as construction is underway, the resort's long-term economic impact on the surrounding communities, including Ulster County, will be apparent. The project is expected to create a total of 1,800 construction jobs over an eight year period, with an additional 450 full-time and 150 part-time jobs available once the resort is up-and-running. Furthermore, the towns of Shandaken and Middleton, the local school districts, and Ulster and Delaware Counties will be the beneficiaries of the more than \$2 million in property taxes the resort is projected to pay annually, while state and county sales tax will likewise top \$2 million per year.

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Art & Culture

The success of the art and culture segment of the Hudson Valley's tourism industry is likely related to the region's relatively recent cultural renaissance and rejuvenated fervor for the arts. Resultantly, the region has earned a much-deserved reputation among art enthusiasts as a premier cultural destination, reaping significant economic dividends in the process. As that reputation becomes increasingly known to the wider public, those dividends will likely grow.

The Hudson Valley boasts a host of prominent artistic institutions, among them the Hessel Museum of Art at Bard College, the Bardavon 1869 Opera House in Poughkeepsie, the Ulster Performing Arts Center in Kingston, and Dia, a fine arts museum in Beacon, NY, just 40 miles south of Kingston. Opened in 2003, Dia has drawn more than 350,000 visitors in its five years, and contributes over \$10 million per year to regional economic development, according to a study by the Center for Creative Community Development. This is a feasible estimate, considering the Hudson Valley arts community takes purposeful steps to create regional cohesiveness. "Art Along the Hudson," a series of popular monthly art events, links Dia with other cultural venues and activities in Beacon, Kingston, Poughkeepsie, Newburgh, Rhinebeck, Hudson and Catskill through a cooperative media campaign. In a similarly complementary relationship, the Woodstock Film Festival exposes the region to directors, producers, and actors, some of whom later return to shoot their own films with assistance from the Hudson Valley Film Commission. The Fisher Center, Summerscape and numerous festivals remain popular tourist activities.

The City of Kingston also makes significant contributions to the thriving regional arts scene, accruing considerable benefits as a result. In a February 2007 article, "Bohemian Today, High-Rent Tomorrow," *BusinessWeek* ranked Kingston, along with New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, as one of the ten "Best Places for Artists in America," largely due to its high concentration of artistic establishments (artists' offices, studios, and places of business) and cultural resources (museums, dance and theater companies, college arts programs, and library resources). The same article cites the economic benefits of this creative influx, explaining that artists, as vanguards of the up-and-coming, possess the singular ability to breathe new life into struggling neighborhoods. Generally strapped for funds, they are drawn to a city's most derelict, low-rent districts, subsequently catalyzing a chain of gentrification: chic businesses converge on the neighborhood to meet artists' consumer demands, followed closely by a wealthier demographic seeking cultural fulfillment.

In her research, professor and economist Anne Markusen of the University of Minnesota has found that artists are indeed a significant factor in urban renewal and regional economic development. The reasons, she cites: local companies benefit from artists' talents and outside-the-box approach to business, and can capitalize on a city's rich cultural reputation as a selling point in persuading highly desirable employees to the area. Moreover, anecdotal reports from local businesses owners emphasize the

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increased patronage they experience as a result of the foot traffic generated by nearby art venues and events.

In recent recognition of art's economic import, state Assemblyman Kevin Cahill (D-Ulster, Dutchess) announced in September 2007 the passage of legislation to create a pilot grant program through the New York State Council of the Arts to support artists and arts organizations in securing living and work space in Kingston.

Farmers Markets

As noted, farm activities and the availability of locally-produced foods have also been important factors in attracting visitors to both Ulster County and the greater Hudson Valley, two areas where farmers markets serve as important sources of revenue for hundreds of agriculture-dependent families. Fortunately for the region, experts have predicted that rising imported food costs together with the growing popularity of eating organically and locally will result in increased farmers market sales this year and in the foreseeable future. Orchards and vineyards of Ulster County are popular tourist draws.

Region-wide, farmers markets have already experienced rising consumer demand, and have expanded to keep pace. Currently, popular markets operate in New Paltz, Kingston, Poughkeepsie, Hyde Park, Rhinebeck, Woodstock, Saugerties, and Rosendale—many of which opened in the past two years alone. Between 2004 and 2007, farmers markets across the state grew from a total of 320 to 391, a 22% increase in three years.

Anecdotal evidence that individual markets, which generally run from early June to late October in accordance with New York's growing season, are booming. Rhinebeck added Thursday to its weekly schedule in accommodation of additional shoppers, while the Kingston market, now in its 9th year, has grown to feature special events, chef demonstrations, product tastings, and giveaways to entertain its more than 1,800 visitors per week. Furthermore, officials in Poughkeepsie hail the 10-year old market as a vital economic stimulus. As the number of visitors to the market has grown over the years, so has neighborhood foot traffic and patronage to other nearby businesses.

Conclusion

As evidenced in this report, Kingston's livelihood, indeed its very existence, was, is, and will continue to be inextricably linked to both its strategic position along the Hudson River and its proximity to New York City.

Certainly, the river was an essential factor in the Kingston area's initial settlement by the Dutch families of Fort Orange, who chose the location for its fertile flood plains and depended on the crops it yielded for subsistence. Later, the decision to construct a fort onsite had as much to do with Peter Stuyvesant's tactical desire to secure a Dutch

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stronghold midway between Fort Orange and New Amsterdam (New York) as it did with a need to assuage tensions with Native Americans.

During the American Revolution, any distinction Kingston gained was a fateful result of its propinquity to the tumult and turmoil brewing in New York, and the British's army's calculated plan to take the Hudson River Valley. Likewise, Kingston assumed commercial essentiality in the 19th century as the primary link, by way of the Hudson, between New York and the rest of the country.

Today, the City of Kingston, Ulster County, and the Hudson Valley region still profit from their geographic location. The New York City metro area not only provides gainful employment to the Hudson's growing labor force, but is also the primary source of tourists for both the Hudson Valley and the Catskills.

Moving forward, the region would likely benefit from the further development of its transportation and communications infrastructure in order to support economic growth and increase the efficiency of its linkages to the New York metropolitan area. As a result, the distance that does separate Kingston from New York City will become less of an obstacle, not only to commuters and tourists, but to existing and prospective businesses and governmental operations.