

Section IV - Proposed Land and Water Uses and Proposed Projects

A. Proposed Land Uses

Proposed long term land uses for each sub-area of the Waterfront Revitalization Area (WRA) are illustrated on [Map 9](#), and are described in the following sub-sections.

1. Canal Place

The Canal Place area includes the South Ann Street mixed-use area comprised of commercial and residential uses, former mill buildings, and Sterziner Park, a passive recreation area and public gathering space. The Canal Place area also includes the East Mill Street industrial area; the West Mill Street area, including several largely vacant industrial-type buildings and commercial uses; the Elizabeth Street area, comprised of a large industrial mill building now used by small businesses; and Hansen Island, home of Redco Foods.

The LWRP recognizes the uniqueness and special qualities of most portions of the Canal Place area, especially the South Ann and West Mill Street areas. These qualities should be preserved, protected and enhanced. Overall, future development in the Canal Place area should be subject to land use regulations and building design guidelines that will ensure all future development and redevelopment is well-designed and incorporates improvements that are compatible with the existing and planned neighborhood environment, canal history, and the area's special qualities.

Proposed land uses in Canal Place reflect a continuation of the mixture of residential and commercial uses in the South Ann Street area, and continuation of industrial uses in the East Mill Street and Elizabeth Street areas. The West Mill Street area is an area in transition, and is proposed for mixed commercial and residential uses as an extension of the South Ann Street area.

The adaptive reuse of former industrial buildings in the South Ann Street and West Mill Street areas is critically important to the long term revitalization of the Canal Place area. These mill buildings should be redeveloped for retail, visitor, and boater-service and/or restaurant uses. Upper floors can be adaptively reused for housing or office use.

Preservation of the historic character of these areas is also of key importance. Any new construction, rehabilitation, and/or public improvement activities should complement and enhance the historic character of the Canal Place area, and not compromise it.

The area south of the CSX railroad tracks are part of the new "Waterfront District", where residential, commercial, waterfront-related and recreational uses are permitted to coexist.

Limited industrial use may also be appropriate if the particular industry does not detract from the area's character.

All development projects and improvements within the "Waterfront District" are subject to Planning Board approval and consistency with the Site Plan Review guidelines developed as part of this LWRP. The review will ensure that improvements are consistent with development goals and this LWRP.

2. South Side

The South Side area includes approximately 200 predominately one- and two-family residential properties nestled between the Erie Canal and steep cliffs as described on the Inventory and Analysis. Most residential uses are concentrated in the area north and east of State Route 167. The area south of Route 167 is a mixed-use area comprised of the Little Falls Lumber Company, two fuel oil companies, a one-story manufacturing building, as well as a limited number of one- and two-family residential properties.

The South Side neighborhood also includes the Canal Terminal Building and adjacent park property that has been identified and enhanced as a "Canal Harbor" site by New York State, and Columbus Park, a small neighborhood recreation facility. The NYS Canalway Trail is a paved, multi-purpose trail that extends through the eastern portion of the South Side area between Finks Basin and Railroad Street, just east of State Route 167. This one-mile trail runs along the right-of-way of the former West Shore Railroad.

Continued residential uses are proposed for most of the area north and east of State Route 167. The "Waterfront District" zoning designation applies to portions of the South Side and provides for a mix of residential, commercial, light industrial, waterfront-related and recreational uses. This designation also requires Planning Board approval of all development projects and improvements proposed in the area. The "Waterfront District" ensures that improvements proposed are consistent with the LWRP.

3. Loomis and Moss Islands

Loomis Island is essentially undeveloped at this time, but has the potential to be developed for recreational, industrial, commercial or perhaps public purposes, depending on market conditions and future development in other portions of the waterfront. A mix of uses is also possible. For this reason, Loomis Island is included in the "Waterfront District" and subject to the development controls associated with this designation as described above.

Moss Island should remain a national natural landmark appropriate for limited recreation use and conservation.

The shoreline areas along the Erie Canal on Moss and Loomis Islands should be designated for open space and be accessible to the public. Public trails and canal walks are proposed for the shoreline areas.

At the Benton's Landing area, the public dock and bulkhead tie-up area has recently been improved. The brick structures on Mohawk Street are proposed for mixed commercial and residential uses consistent with the *NYS Canal Recreationway Plan*. These buildings can be redeveloped as bed and breakfast operations, canal-side housing, or other canal-related uses.

4. Central Business District

The Central Business District comprises much of the Waterfront Revitalization Area north of the CSX railroad and Route 5 arterial. Proposed land uses for this area represent a continuation of existing, long-established development patterns. There are very few vacant parcels in the Central Business District available for development, but many properties have redevelopment potential.

Among the key redevelopment projects in the Central Business District is the renovation and re-use of the Burrell Building at the heart of the downtown. Extensive work will be required to restore this building to its once stately prominence. The City supports a private commercial re-use of the Burrell Building, but it is recognized that a public use of all or a portion of the building may be appropriate.

Another critical redevelopment need is the Shopper's Square mall between Main and Albany Streets. As described in the Inventory and Analysis, the mall was constructed in 1965, and requires major renovation coupled with aggressive marketing to attract high quality commercial tenants. An adaptive reuse of all or part of this property may be necessary if the market for commercial retail use continues to decline. Other commercial redevelopment opportunities exist at the former Rite-Aid Drug Store property on North Ann Street, and on Urban Renewal Parcel 9 on Albany Street.

The north side of Main Street is comprised of first floor commercial and upper floor residential structures generally in need of rehabilitation treatment. In the 1970's, a canopy structure was constructed over the sidewalk on this side of the street. The canopy has been upgraded, and must be maintained diligently in the future.

The Central Business District is linked to the Canal Place area via South Ann Street and a deteriorated underpass that extends under the CSX rail- road tracks. South Ann Street has been recently upgraded and enhanced using an Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) grant and local funds. Improvements to the underpass were included in this project. In the long term, a new pedestrian overpass is needed to better link the CBD with Canal Place.

5. Riverside Industrial Park

The Riverside Industrial Park is home to five manufacturing operations and one vacant manufacturing building. At the western end of the park is the Mohawk River Park, which includes a boat launch, floating docks, and a small picnic area. At the entrance to the Industrial Park are the historical remains of a 1797 lock constructed by the Inland Lock and Navigation Company. Proposed uses for the Riverside Industrial Park include a continuation of the present industrial uses, as well as the Mohawk River Park and historic lock site. Launch facilities at the

park are in need of improvement, and development of new launch facilities at the Canal Harbor is being developed.

6. River Road

Development in the River Road area is limited by steep topography and extremely rocky conditions. The Little Falls Sewage Treatment Plant is the only development in the area, and this use must and should be continued. As with Moss Island, this area is an important rock-climbing location, and ways to enhance this increasingly popular activity should be continually examined.

B. Proposed Water Uses/Harbor Management Plan

Recreational boating and fishing are the prime water uses in the City along the Erie Canal/Mohawk River at the present time, although a hydroelectric plant on the western portion of Moss Island also utilizes the water that flows through the canal.

Revitalization of the Little Falls waterfront is dependent upon increasing boater facilities, improving waterfront conditions and ambiance, and creating a “critical mass” of attractions and quality visitor amenities. To this end, Canal Harbor enhancements have been completed at the Canal Terminal site; the Benton’s Landing docking site has been expanded; a series of canal and river trails and walks have been proposed; and the Mohawk River Park has been identified for improvement. These water-related improvements, and others, will serve local and transient boaters, and will attract more visitors to the waterfront area. The projects are described in greater detail in section C. below.

In addition, the development of a whitewater park has been proposed for the free-flowing Mohawk River that, combined with the rock-climbing on Moss Island and along River Road, will provide the Little Falls waterfront with distinctive recreation resources that will help attract active recreationalists to the waterfront area.

Harbor Management Plan

As previously described in *Section I, Waterfront Revitalization Area Boundary*, and *Section II, Inventory and Analysis*, the Mohawk River and the Erie Canal flow through the Mohawk valley, and the river and its artificial land-cut channel flow through Little Falls. The Erie Canal is part of the State Canal System and is owned and maintained by the New York State Canal Corporation. Consistent with boating activities throughout the Canal System, long term water uses appropriate for the Erie Canal within Little Falls include recreational and, to a lesser extent, commercial boating.

A key recommendation set forth in the statewide Canal Revitalization Program was the establishment of harbor centers and service ports at existing urban and village centers along the length of the Canal System which would provide an array of pedestrian and boater public services aimed at revitalizing the System as a major recreation resource. In this regard, Little Falls was identified to serve as one of seven (7) major Canal System harbor centers, and the NYS Canal Corporation, together with the Department of State, subsequently invested nearly two

million dollars for completion of extensive harbor improvements within the City of Little Falls at the Erie Canal terminal site on Southern Avenue, including the following:

- the canal terminal building was adaptively reused to serve as public restrooms, harbor master facilities, office of the State Council of Waterways, and other boater amenities;
- a 30 ft. wide boat launch, together with vehicular parking;
- 350 linear ft. of floating docks;
- park benches, trash receptacles, and bicycle racks;
- an information kiosk and directional signage;
- lighting;
- bulkhead repairs; and
- picnic facilities.

Jurisdiction for use of the Canal and shoreline rests with New York State. In this regard, the Canal Corporation maintains the navigation channel and canal infrastructure. In addition, rules and regulations adopted pursuant to NYS Canal Law (21 NYCRR Sub-chapter D, Parts 150-156) and design standards enforced by the Canal Corporation serve as the definitive controls governing use of the Canal. Key provisions set forth in the rules and regulations are as follows:

- Navigation season - beginning from April 5th - May 20th to November 15-20;
- Size of boats - up to 300 ft. long and 43.5 ft. wide;
- Maximum boat speed - 6 mph along land-cut canal segments (such as Whitehall) and dependent on local conditions along canalized rivers and lakes; and
- Occupancy of Canal Corporation lands adjacent to the Canal System is regulated through the issuance of revocable permits by the Canal Corporation.

The Canal Corporation also enforces guidelines governing the construction of docks along the Canal System, set forth in *Standards for Docks on the Canal System* (Appendix D.). Key provisions of those standards are as follows:

- Applicable to residential/non-commercial docks accommodating four or fewer boats with a maximum dock length of 100 ft. (commercial and larger docks analyzed on a case-by-case basis);
- Docks shall not interfere with Canal navigation;
- Docks shall have a minimum offset of 24 ft. (for land-cut canal sections) or 50 ft. (for canalized water bodies) from navigation channels;
- Docks shall be constructed parallel to the shore in land-cut areas and be at least 50 ft. from navigation aids;
- Dock designs shall be approved by the Canal Corporation;

- Boat slips must incorporate acceptable provisions for shoreline protection;
- One dock per property owner is permitted;
- Docks shall not restrict access across Canal lands;
- Docks shall be set back at least 10 ft. from adjacent property lines; and
- Excavated slips shall be no larger than 1,000 square ft.

C. Proposed Projects

1. Introduction and Background

Since the first plans were prepared for the Erie Canal and Little Falls waterfront in 1989 as part of the *Erie Canal Development Feasibility Study*, numerous and varied projects have been identified and completed to revitalize the area. Several of these projects, including the improvement of the Canal Place/South Ann Street area, the first-phase development of Benton's Landing, and creation of Sterziner Park, have been implemented and have helped to stimulate further interest and enthusiasm for additional revitalization efforts.

In 1995, the City prepared a *Waterfront Center Development Program* and submitted this program for consideration by the New York State Thruway Authority and the Canal Recreationway Commission as part of the process utilized by New York State to prepare the *NYS Canal Recreationway Plan*.

The City developed a series of projects as part of the Canal Corridor Initiative that emphasized public and private partnership efforts to revitalize the Canal. These planning efforts have formed the basis for the projects proposed as part of this LWRP. Proposed projects are illustrated on [Map 10](#), and are described according to their sub-area location in the following sections:

2. Canal Place

Mill and Industrial Building Redevelopment

The Canal Place revitalization effort must be continued by rehabilitating and redeveloping the stone mill buildings on the north shore of the Mohawk River and other vacant industrial buildings in Canal Place for retail, visitor, and other adaptive reuses.

The Mohawk Mill, located on South Ann Street at the Mohawk River, occupies one of the most strategic locations on the Canal and is large enough to accommodate multiple uses. The Mill has been extensively renovated, so that at street level it now houses an old time café, and specialty retail space including antiques, natural health products, ceramics and books. Upstairs is a fifty-seat performance and meeting space, and a variety of business suites, and then an inn on the top floor.

The adjacent mill building (25 West at Canal Place) is also a former mill, and was adaptively rehabilitated as an antique center, with unique riverfront housing being constructed on the top floor of the three story structure. Other buildings in Canal Place, including the Donovan Andrew Little and 20 West at Canal Place industrial buildings, are proposed for adaptive reuse as retail,

service and light industrial uses. These structures could also be innovatively adapted for artist or craft oriented uses. To facilitate these improvements, the City must forge public/private partnerships, and continually look to expand revolving loan funds and access other low interest loan funds that can leverage private funds and make costly rehabilitation projects affordable.

Total estimated cost: \$3,000,000

Canal Place/CBD Linkage Improvements

The *NYS Canal Recreationway Plan* recommended that streetscape improvements be installed along South Ann Street in support of Canal Place revitalization and to better link the Canal and Canal Place area with the Central Business District to the north. Improvements proposed include: installation of ornamental period lighting; relocation of unsightly overhead utility lines; landscaping; and installation of street furniture and brick pavers. Continued improvement of the railroad underpass to the CBD is also critically needed.

In the long term, a pedestrian overpass linking the CBD and Canal Place is proposed that will eliminate the need for the underpass.

Total estimated cost:

Street Improvements/Utility Relocation	\$1,000,000
Overpass Construction	\$1,000,000

Trail Development

The entire Little Falls waterfront offers numerous trail development opportunities. A trail along the north shore of the Mohawk River is proposed that would extend west to the Mohawk River Park/Boat Launch in the Riverside Industrial Park and east along East Mill Street to, and over, the South William Street Bridge. The development of a “Riverwalk” on the river side of the Canal Place mill buildings would be a significant area attraction and mill building uses. From the South William Street Bridge the trail can be linked near the Asteroga Mill building to a trail proposed for the north shore of the Erie Canal, as described in the Moss and Loomis Island section below.

The construction/designation of this trail requires that safety improvements be made to the South William Street Bridge.

Total estimated cost:

River Trail North	\$100,000
South William Street Bridge	\$200,000
Riverwalk Trail	\$350,000

Sterziner Park Enhancements

Sterziner Park was developed with benches, landscaping, lighting, and a small performance stage. The park functions as a passive recreation and open space area at the center of Canal Place. In the future, this park can be improved by installing a fountain and ice rink that will serve as a focal point of the area, upgrading existing facilities, and extending use of the park through the winter season.

Total estimated cost: \$250,000

Canal Heritage Corridor Improvements

The historic nature of Little Falls as it relates to canal development has been well-documented. Similarly, the confusing system of roadways, one-way streets, bridges and ramps leading to and from the waterfront areas in the City is well-documented, and a significant impediment to Canal Place and waterfront prosperity.

It is proposed that a comprehensive, well-coordinated signage program be designed in concert with the Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor Commission, and implemented in cooperation with the NYS Canal Corporation and the NYS Department of Transportation. These signs would include wayfinding, informational, and interpretive signs and kiosks designed in accordance with standards now being developed for use throughout the Canal Corridor by the NYS Canal Corporation.

Such a project would significantly enhance the marketability of Canal Place, and the entire waterfront as a tourist center.

Total estimated cost: \$100,000

South Ann Street Bridge Improvements

The bridge over the Mohawk River linking Canal Place with Benton’s Landing, Loomis Island, and Moss Island is in need of extensive repair and improvement.

Total estimated cost: \$1,500,000

3. South Side

Canal Harbor Development

Central to the *NYS Canal Recreationway Plan* is the development of the Canal Terminal site on the south side of the Canal as one of the seven Canal Harbors across the New York State Canal System. Little Falls is a highly strategic canal location because of its location as the boating midpoint between the Hudson River and Syracuse.

The conceptual plan proposed in the *NYS Canal Recreationway Plan* recommended the adaptive re-use of the wooden Terminal Building as a charter-boat office, operations center with interpretive exhibits, and a visitor information distribution component, which has largely been completed. A boat workshop with a hoist and ramp were proposed, along with floating docks for transient boats and a rehabilitated terminal wall. A waterfront promenade, park amenities, lighting and street furniture were also proposed, and these types of improvements are supported in this LWRP.

Substantial work has been completed at what is now the Canal Harbor and Rotary Park, with landscaping, newly rebuilt bulkhead and a visitor center in the Terminal Building. A further implementation grant has been awarded to rebuild the boat launch, parking and docking area, to add a fueling station and to incorporate additional renovations and reuse possibilities for the Terminal Building.

Total estimated cost: \$2,000,000

Canal Harbor Enhancements

The development of a Canal Harbor at the Canal Terminal site must be accompanied by enhancement activities on the South Side. Projects that expand public access to the waterfront and provide commercial facilities in support of the Canal Harbor are needed to help achieve full waterfront revitalization. The development of such amenities as restaurants, food stores, family entertainment center uses, and lodging facilities would contribute to the creation of a “critical mass” of attractions needed to make Little Falls a successful tourist destination, both from land and the Canal.

Enhancement projects that improve the ambiance and general condition of the Canal Terminal neighborhood are also needed. These projects include the installation of ornamental period lighting, public parking, and landscaping that buffers industrial and other non-canal related uses.

A final enhancement project proposed is the construction of a new access road from Route 167 to the Canal Harbor area which would drastically reduce traffic and traffic conflicts on Southern Avenue.

Total estimated cost:

Private enhancement projects \$1,000,000

Public enhancements \$400,000

NYS Canalway Trail Extension

The City has successfully completed a one mile portion of this trail that extends from Finks Basin to Railroad Street just east of Route 167. The trail needs to be completed and extended through the City and linked with the Canal Harbor site and north side canal amenities, as well. Extending the trail as a waterfront promenade between the Route 167 Bridge and Canal Harbor is

preferred to utilizing Southern Avenue, which has conflicts with lumber company operations. To the east, the trail should be extended to the Herkimer Home, and eventually linked to completed sections in Montgomery County.

As part of, or independent of, the trail improvements, the Danube Street Bridge requires improvement to remove future threats of closure.

Total estimated cost: \$100,000 - \$500,000

Lock 17 Park Improvements

The park at Lock 17 includes a popular fishing area, a lock from the original Erie Canal, and access to Lock 17. A small building, developed as an environmental/interpretive/information center, is also located at this park.

The park could be improved by adding landscaping, and linking the park to the NYS Canalway Trail to the south.

Total estimated cost: \$100,000

Columbus Park Improvements

Columbus Park is located immediately adjacent to the south shore of the Erie Canal and the Route 167 Bridge. It also occupies a strategic location along the NYS Canalway Trail route. As part of the extension of the NYS Canalway Trail, Columbus Park should be improved with ornamental period lighting, a shoreline trail, benches, and new children’s play facilities.

Total estimated cost: \$200,000

Housing Rehabilitation

The South Side area of Little Falls includes a concentration of one- and two-family houses occupied by primarily by lower income households. Houses in the area are old, and many need rehabilitation treatment. The low incomes of most residents, combined with the degree of deterioration evidenced, requires that the City implement a program of grants and low interest loans to facilitate housing rehabilitation in the South Side area. This program will improve and stabilize living conditions, eliminate health and safety problems and neighborhood blight, and will dove-tail perfectly with Canal and waterfront revitalization efforts.

Total estimated cost: \$800,000

Route 167 Business Park Development

The Herkimer County Industrial Development Agency owns approximately 27 acres of vacant land along Route 167 in the Town of Little Falls. This land has the potential to be developed as an industrial park that would contribute to the revitalization of the Little Falls waterfront area by

expanding the local industrial base and workforce, and by providing a land resource for business expansion activities.

To achieve this end, water and sewer lines need to be extended along the West Shore Railroad right-of-way, which is also the location proposed for the NYS Canalway Trail. These compatible uses have the potential to be developed at the same time.

Total estimated cost: \$1,000,000

Danube Street Bridge

This bridge extends over the Canal Recreationway Trail and provides the sole means of access to approximately 20 residential structures east of the bridge. Reconstruction is needed to facilitate safe access travel beneath and over the bridge.

Total estimated cost: \$300,000

4. Loomis and Moss Islands

Benton's Landing Improvement Project - Phases I and II

The *NYS Canal Recreationway Plan* recommended that vertical wall (bulkhead) sections east and west of Benton's Landing be cut to accommodate lower level mooring at Canal Place. The City has completed one such cut, and this has been effectively utilized by touring and pleasure boats traveling the Canal. As part of the Canal Corridor Initiative, the City acquired a very deteriorated, vacant property adjacent to the Benton's Landing site, demolished the building, and completed streetscape and landscape improvements to the site. Second phase improvements include the bulkhead improvements noted above, and/or floating dock improvements at or near the landing.

Total estimated cost: \$100,000

Mohawk Street Building Redevelopment

Like the Canal Place area, Mohawk Street contains buildings that are currently vacant, but contain extraordinary redevelopment potential. This potential will be further increased as public and private projects at Benton's Landing and Canal Place are implemented.

Total estimated cost: \$300,000 - \$500,000

Trail Development

Loomis and Moss Islands contain shoreline areas ideally suited for trail development. A Canal Walk along the north shore of the Erie Canal would provide shoreline access from Lock 17 and the eastern end of Moss Island to the western end of Loomis Island. This trail can eventually be developed as a boardwalk-type promenade, with attractive period lighting and streetscape amenities consistent with Canal Place and Benton’s Landing improvements. The trail can be extended along the northern shoreline of Loomis Island and southern shore of the Mohawk River, providing access to the whitewater and fishing resources of the river. Where the promenade and whitewater access trail meet, an observation point could be developed that would offer spectacular views of the Canal and Canal Harbor area.

On Moss Island to the east, the trail along the north shore of the Canal can be linked with a trail that extends along the north shore of the Mohawk River via the South William Street Bridge. The Asteroga Mill building, located adjacent to the South William Street Bridge on Seeley Island, could be redeveloped in conjunction with the Trail Development Project.

Total estimated cost: \$500,000

Whitewater Park Development and Fishing Access Improvements

Canoe and kayak enthusiasts and the American Canoe Association have identified the potential to make Little Falls a “whitewater park” that would be extremely unique, due to its accessibility and urban location. In addition to trail access improvements, required whitewater improvements include slalom course development (rock movement and placement), and spectator access improvements along the river’s shorelines. These improvements would also enhance access to fishing areas along the Mohawk River, which currently can be accessed only by energetic and athletic children and extremely enthusiastic adults due to the rugged terrain.

Total estimated cost: \$250,000

Loomis Island Development

The City believes Loomis Island has great public/private development potential. Many uses have been proposed, including townhouse and other residential development, park development and campground development. The Island offers spectacular views of the Canal and Mohawk River, and its shorelines provide excellent access to these waters.

To facilitate Loomis Island development, water and sewer lines need to be extended from the South Ann Street/Benton’s Landing area to the site of the former dairy building at the western end of the island. A pump station for sewage and underground electrical service is also needed on the western end of the Island.

A market feasibility study was prepared several years ago for Loomis Island, and campground use was identified as most feasible. The study, however, pre-dates Canal revitalization initiatives

undertaken at the Federal, State and local levels, and a new study is now warranted to reevaluate potential uses.

Total estimated cost:

Feasibility Study	\$50,000
Development	To be determined based on selected use

Waterfront Parking at Loomis Island/Benton’s Landing

Parking in the Canal Place area and throughout the entire Little Falls waterfront is extremely limited at present. More parking will be essential if full enjoyment and utilization of the Canal is to be realized in Little Falls. The area that is now below the Route 167 Bridge is level, centrally located, and could be developed into a much-needed parking area without detracting from the Canal, Mohawk River, or other Canal resources in the area. This parking facility would serve both the Canal Place and Loomis Island areas, and could be attractively tied to the shoreline trails, including the proposed Riverwalk.

Total estimated cost: \$100,000

5. Central Business District

The Waterfront Revitalization Area includes virtually the entire area of the Central Business District and several fringe residential areas. Projects within the Central Business district include the following:

Main Street Enhancements

To revitalize the core of the Central Business District, improve the linkage between the CBD and Canal Place, and to enhance pedestrian and vehicular travel, the City has planned and is implementing coordinated streetscape improvements, including new sidewalks, ornamental period lighting, brick pavers, landscaping, and street furniture. Using federal and local funds, current improvements extend along the south side of Main Street from Williams Street to Ann Street, and along South Ann Street from Main Street to Route 5.

In future phases, similar improvements need to be completed on Main Street, east of William and west of Ann Streets, along Albany Street, along North Ann Street, and on North Second and Mary Streets.

Total estimated cost:

Current projects	\$450,000
Future projects	\$650,000

Shopper’s Square Redevelopment

At the heart of the CBD, the Shopper’s Square mall occupies two full square City blocks. The mall has been poorly maintained, plagued by vacancies and lease-up problems, and is a general detriment to City and waterfront revitalization efforts. Improvement of this property is critically needed, and initial improvements have begun.

Many ideas for improving Shopper’s Square have been expressed. Redevelopment ideas put forth to date include: demolition and new construction; conversion to office and/or medical service use; and renovation for continued retail commercial use. The concept of converting or developing the site as a major park and recreation resource has also been mentioned. New owners have initiated improvements, and maintaining the mall as a retail commercial facility will hopefully prove successful.

Total estimated cost: \$1,000,000

North Side Of Main Street Improvements

As described in earlier sections, the north side of Main Street includes mixed-use commercial/residential structures, many of which are vacant, and a sidewalk canopy structure that was constructed over 20 years ago.

To date, the City has not been successful in developing a building improvement and/or commercial loan program that adequately addresses the economic needs of struggling local businesses and, at the same time, leverages private funds as required by most programs of assistance. A program that successfully addresses these two criteria is needed to improve the north side of Main Street, and stabilize the business district.

A long-standing redevelopment problem on Main Street has been the Burrell Building, located at the corner of Main and Ann Streets. In 1998, an owner began to rehabilitate this architecturally significant building, but the project ended unsuccessfully and the building ultimately was turned over to the Little Falls Urban Renewal Agency. As part of this project, the deteriorated Rialto Theater building was demolished to remove a serious health and safety problem, and to create critically needed space for parking. The demolition of the former theater has created an opportunity to develop a large, attractively landscaped parking area behind the buildings that front on the north side of Main Street. These public improvements should be combined with improvements to the buildings themselves to create a more attractive shopping and living environment.

The canopy structure has recently been improved with new painting, lighting, electrical, and signage.

Total estimated cost:

Main Street Building Improvements	\$1,000,000
Burrell Building Improvements	To be determined
Parking Improvements	\$350,000

East Main Street Park and Parking Development Project

The City of Little Falls has recently acquired a vacant, deteriorated gas station property adjacent to City Hall. This property is proposed to be redeveloped as a small park and parking area. Improvements needed on site include retaining wall reinforcement, landscaping, pedestrian amenities, and street furniture.

Total estimated cost: \$200,000

Housing Rehabilitation

The eastern portion of the Central Business District sub-area, including portions of East Main Street, Albany Street, John Street, Hancock Street and Petrie Street, include residential uses in need of rehabilitation. Census data indicates over 50 % of the residents of this area are of lower income and without the resources to complete needed improvements. A program of grants and low interest loans to facilitate housing rehabilitation in the eastern portion of the Central Business District sub-area is proposed to improve and stabilize living conditions, and eliminate health and safety problems and neighborhood blight.

Total estimated cost: \$2,000,000

6. Riverside Industrial Park

Purchase of Vacant Land

The Riverside Industrial Park has been fully occupied for several years, but a lack of developable land has limited opportunities for industrial growth in the City. Approximately 10 acres of land within the park are owned by LaSalle Industries and remain undeveloped. When LaSalle first came to the Park, they planned to develop distribution facilities on this property, but these plans have never materialized.

Every effort should be made by the City and various economic development organizations serving the City to re-acquire these vacant lands and make them available for new industries.

The City also needs to encourage and support full and maximum use of existing manufacturing buildings within the Riverside Industrial Park, including the former Color Print and Motronics buildings.

Total estimated cost: To be determined

Mohawk River Park Improvement

The far western end of the Industrial Park includes a small park area that features a deteriorated boat launch, floating docks, a picnic pavilion, and several fireplaces. The boat launch needs to be replaced, and general conditions in the park improved. As an alternate, new boat launch facilities should be developed as part of the Canal Harbor project.

Total estimated cost: \$50,000

Park Entrance and Historic Lock Improvements

The current entrance to the Riverside Industrial Park is marred by deteriorated signage and poor landscaping. The remnants of the 1797 Lock are noted with a sign, but the lock area is not well-maintained. A new entrance to the park is needed to improve marketability and properly feature the historic lock.

Total estimated cost: \$30,000

Waterfront Business Loan Fund

To help local businesses expand and facilitate economic development projects, the City needs to continue to utilize its revolving loan fund and augment this RLF with other low interest loan funds. The continued use of public/private partnerships is needed to stabilize and retain the City's industrial base, and leverage private investment that would not otherwise occur.

Strengthening the City's industrial base will strengthen the overall waterfront physically and economically by maintaining a year-round work force in the area.

Total estimated cost: \$1,000,000

7. River Road Area

The only development in this area is the Little Falls Sewage Treatment Plant. Improvements to the plant and at the Burrows Paper Mill are needed to reduce discharges into the river at peak flows, and to expand the overall capacity of the plant.

Total estimated cost: To be determined

8. Major New York State Transportation Projects

Two major transportation projects will impact the development and revitalization of the Waterfront Revitalization Area in the City of Little Falls.

The reconstruction of the Route 167 Bridge will impact almost every portion of the WRA, as this bridge provides access to and from the Canal Place area, the East Mill Street industrial area, and the Riverside Industrial Park. The bridge is also the remaining in-City link between the north and south side areas of the City. Planning for the improvement of this bridge has been on-going for several years, and is now entering the preliminary design stage. It is imperative that final plans carefully plan for safe pedestrian, as well as vehicular, access to and throughout the waterfront.

The City supports a bridge design that will minimize heavy truck impacts on the Canal Place area. The retention of two access bridges is critical to long term waterfront revitalization efforts.

A second State transportation project that will impact the waterfront is improvement of State Route 169 from Route 5 to the north City line. This roadway extends through the heart of the WRA, and will impact streetscape enhancements planned and completed, and travel conditions in the CBD and northern City neighborhoods.

The City is identifying these projects as a means to insure that all improvements will be consistent with the LWRP.

Total estimated cost: To be determined

9. General Planning Activities

The City has a Master Plan and zoning regulations that date back to the 1970’s. Although several changes have been completed through the years, a new Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance is needed.

Although this LWRP will help guide development in the waterfront area, which incorporates most of the key areas of the City, a new Master Plan should be considered in the years ahead. Similarly, a new “Waterfront District” zoning classification was enacted that provides for more flexible but controlled development in the area south of the CSX train line. The LWRP also introduces Site Plan Review provisions to the City’s Zoning Regulations that apply to the entire WRA.

In the longer term, the Zoning Regulations should be updated in concert with the Master Plan.

Total estimated cost: \$50,000

10. Summary of LWRP Projects

Projects identified in the above narrative are summarized on the following chart by sub-area location.

City of Little Falls Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Project Summary	
LOCATION Project Name	ESTIMATED COST
CANAL PLACE	
Mill and Industrial Building Redevelopment	\$3,000,000
Canal Place/CBD Linkage Improvements	2,000,000
South Ann Street Improvements	(1,000,000)
Overpass Development	(1,000,000)
Trail Development	650,000
River Trail North	(100,000)
South William Street Bridge	(200,000)

City of Little Falls Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Project Summary	
LOCATION Project Name	ESTIMATED COST
Riverwalk Trail	(350,000)
Sterziner Park Enhancements	250,000
Canal Heritage Corridor Improvements	100,000
South Ann Street Bridge Improvements	1,500,000
SOUTH SIDE	
Canal Harbor Development	\$1-2,000,000
Canal Harbor Enhancements (Private and Public)	1,400,000
NYS Canalway Trail Extension	100,000 - 500,000
Lock 17 Lock Park Improvements	100,000
Columbus Park Improvements	200,000
Housing Rehabilitation	800,000
Route 167 Business Park Development	1,000,000
Danube Street Bridge Reconstruction	300,000
LOOMIS and MOSS ISLANDS	
Benton's Landing Improvement Project - Phases I and II	\$100,000
Mohawk Street Building Redevelopment	300,000 - 500,000
Trail Development	350,000
Whitewater Park Development and Fishing Access Improvements	250,000
Loomis Island Development	TBD
Waterfront Parking at Loomis Island/Benton's Landing	100,000
CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT	
Main Street Enhancements	\$1,100,000
Shopper's Square Improvements	1,000,000
North Side of Main Street Improvements	1,500,000
Building Improvements	(1,000,000)
Burrell Building Redevelopment	(TBD)
Parking Improvements	(350,000)
East Main Street Park and Parking Development	200,000
Housing Rehabilitation	2,000,000
RIVERSIDE INDUSTRIAL PARK	
Purchase of Vacant Land	TBD
Mohawk River Park Improvement	\$50,000
Park Entrance and Historic Lock Improvements	30,000
Waterfront Business Loan Fund	1,000,000
RIVER ROAD AREA	
Sewage Treatment Plant Improvements	TBD
NYS TRANSPORTATION PROJECT (Area-Wide)	
Route 167 Bridge Reconstruction	TBD
Route 169 Improvements	TBD
GENERAL PLANNING ACTIVITIES	
Update of Master Plan and Zoning Regulations	\$50,000