

Section IV. Proposed Projects

The Wilmington Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) Citizens' Committee has prioritized the following projects to implement the community's vision. These projects are derived from the process of completing a Waterfront Inventory and Analysis and Policy Development. They also draw on existing plans, such as the 2001 Community Revitalization Plan and the 2003 Olympic Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan, the priorities of which will be maintained and considered throughout the LWRP project implementation process.

More importantly the projects described below reflect the stated interests and input of the local community gathered through public meetings, workshops, letters, and surveys. The committee solicited this information, gathered the inventory information contained in Section II, identified the key needs and issues, and developed the following list of recommended actions. The list is far-reaching and the scope for implementation covers a long time-frame.

The categories of projects fall into three main groups identified early on through public comments: Water Quality Protection and Restoration, Public Access to Waterfront Resources, and Hamlet / Town Revitalization. Each of these sections is broken down into three subcategories: Studies and Planning, Town Actions, and Physical Improvements.

A combination of the following criteria was used to identify project ideas, in order of importance:

- Local Perception of Need
- Cost and Potential Source of Funding
- Level of Difficulty

The intent of these projects is to realize the vision for Wilmington's future as described in Section I. Many of these projects are necessary to achieve the goal of revitalizing the Town and hamlet and becoming an all-season outdoor recreation center. This list is not exhaustive, and all future Town projects should strive to implement the goals of this LWRP. A number of the projects listed below identify an estimated cost for implementation. This number is an estimate, based on 2007 pricing, and should not be interpreted as a fixed cost or a budget line amount, but rather a general estimate of potential project costs.

Water Quality Protection and Restoration

Wilmington relies heavily on the quality of its water and the beauty and functionality of its waterfront areas. Implementation of the projects listed below will ensure the protection and enhancement of the water and waterfront areas of the Town.

Studies and Planning

1. A Watershed Management Plan for the Ausable River is currently underway in conjunction with neighboring communities. Developing a watershed plan is a good technique to assess local water quality conditions and address local land use regulations and practices, which can be used to ensure and/or provide additional water quality protection. (A proposal was submitted in coordination with Ausable River Association to NYS DOS LWRP program year 2005-2006 and granted \$20,000 for work throughout the watershed in Essex and Clinton Counties on 9/6/06, and another grant was awarded by the DOS in 07-08 for completion.)
2. Conduct a Dredging Feasibility Study for Lake Everest in order to explore the options for restoring the Lake for recreational uses. (A proposal was submitted to NYS DOS LWRP program 5/30/06 and granted \$40,000 on 10/30/06 to begin the Feasibility Study, which is currently underway).
3. Conduct a Sedimentation Study / Stream Channel Stability Analysis to identify event-based and chronic sources of sedimentation and options for controlling sediment loading into Lake Everest over the long-term. Include highway depts. (Town, County and State) in the study process to look at solutions including regularly scheduled catchment basin cleaning, increased number of basins and traps, increased sizing as appropriate, minimal ditching and other vegetation removal, improved mulching / gravel cover on shoulders of sloping roads, etc. Estimated cost: \$25,000
4. Study and map the various wildlife habitats within Wilmington using a methodology established by Hudsonia, a non-profit group in the Hudson River Valley, in order to raise awareness of the unique wildlife resources within the boundary.
5. Consider adopting a Flood Damage Prevention Law. This law would require permits for new construction and improvements to existing structures, as well as other projects involving excavation, filling, grading, etc. within flood hazard areas identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. With such a law in place, property owners would be eligible for purchase of subsidized flood damage insurance that would not otherwise be available.

Town Actions

1. Evaluate options for local wetlands protection mechanisms to recognize the value wetlands provide to Wilmington in terms of sediment control, water quality/filtration, habitat, flood control, and recreation.
2. Investigate potential intermunicipal sediment control procedures, and ways to coordinate with Town/County/State Highway departments, Lake Placid and North Elba, Whiteface Mountain and ORDA to achieve zero additional sedimentation into Lake Everest.
3. Provide planning / zoning board training as needed to raise awareness of sediment problems and solutions. Estimated cost: \$500-\$1,500 workshop attendance.
4. Purchase a hydro-seeder jointly with Essex County to move from manual reseeding (after ditching and other disturbance activities) to mechanized seeding. Estimated cost: \$20,000

5. Improve general water quality by working with North Elba and Lake Placid, and other nearby municipalities, through a memorandum of understanding and/or specific projects. (This project is underway as a part of the Watershed Plan mentioned in 1.1.1)
6. Raise local awareness of water quality issues by regularly publishing water quality statistics and results of testing at the beach and in Town Hall and establishing a drainage project using “What you Dump here goes in our Lake/River” signs and stickers.
7. Identify potentially problematic septic systems and establish a framework for assisting homeowners with making improvements, scheduling regular and rigorous testing, and raising funds to upgrade or move failing systems as needed. Consider establishing a volunteer septic system replacement program where the Town gets a grant to provide 50% of the replacement costs. Take advantage of the new Water Pollution Control Linked Deposit Program, a low-interest loan program for upgrading of septic systems available from New York State.
8. Reduce dumping and litter by requesting DEC / DOT support and creation of regular schedules for clean up and enforcement of trash dumping at the Flume and on Lenny Preston road, and other sites as necessary. Advertise Town littering fine of \$1000 with prominent signs and conduct a public education campaign of “Pack in – Pack out” requirement, combined with enforcement crackdown.

Physical Improvements

1. Install additional stormwater treatment facilities at the bridge to Whiteface Mountain in order to control runoff from parking areas into the Ausable River. Estimated cost: \$50,000
2. Note: NYS DOS awarded a FY 2007-2008 EPF LWRP grant in the amount of \$50,000 for the installation of stormwater enhancements at Whiteface Mountain. That project is currently underway.
3. Consider installing additional catchment basins and conducting regular basin cleaning in and around Wilmington. Estimated cost: \$10,000 for four catch basins, with use of existing Highway Department labor for cleaning.
4. Repair dam, gates and racks to empower the Town to effectively control water level in the Ausable River. Estimated cost: Highly variable depending on the condition of the dam.
5. Continue fish stocking while searching for ways to avoid impacts on the native trout population. Estimated cost: \$1,000, donations, agreements with associations, DEC covers costs of stocking; Town requests DEC and ASRA/TU assistance to conduct studies.

Public Access to Waterfront Resources

An important component of creating and maintaining a year-round outdoor recreation center is to ensure that sufficient public access to waterfront and recreation resources is established and maintained. The projects listed in this section are meant to carry out Wilmington’s goal of preserving and enhancing its waterfront and the access points that allow the public to enjoy the unique resources that the Town has to offer.

Studies and Planning

- Prepare a Park Master Plan that protects existing park lands and provides additional public recreational opportunities along Lake Everest and the West Branch of the Ausable River. Identify potential uses of Town land adjoining the beach, such as establishment of interpretive trails, gardens, a tennis court and tether ball area at beach, and landscaping for the picnic area. (A proposal was submitted to NYS DOS LWRP program 5/30/06 and granted \$40,000 on 10/30/06 to prepare a Master Plan for the Town Park. This project is currently being completed as a component of a development project for the park area, with the developer's cost being used as the local match for the grant.)

Town Action

1. Work with the State to increase enforcement of existing public access provisions through cooperation with landowners and the Town (including two existing DEC fishing easements currently not clearly signed or maintained in the vicinity of Lenny Preston and Bonnie View Roads). Other State actions to pursue could include acquiring additional conservation easements, protecting riparian habitats, and where appropriate, acquiring additions to forest preserve specifically to secure improved public access to the river and fishing resources.
2. Identify vacant and/or underutilized properties that could provide future public access, and protect and maintain existing public access points.
3. Owners of property directly abutting the historic bridge or other key downtown sites, and with good views from within the Boundary, should be approached by the Town to consider additional public access arrangements.
4. Request DEC review of all public fishing access sites in Wilmington, with the goal of improving access, signage, trail maintenance, and easement agreements in collaboration with landowners. The sites should eventually be mapped and made available in a directory for local and visitor use.
5. Ensure that parking and sanitary facilities at waterfront properties are well-maintained and accessible.

Physical Improvements

1. Improve and extend the sidewalk system in town center. Priority areas include: from Bonnie View Terrace to corner of 86, from Springfield to Fox Farm, and along Haselton to the end of the houses.
2. Improve the fishing access on Springfield Road to accommodate a wildlife observation point / bird preserve, with a handicapped accessible board walk, in cooperation with land owners. Use this area to train youth and visitors in fishing, birding, and other outdoor recreation sports (apply for Reiss Family Grant). Estimated cost: \$25,000 - \$50,000.
3. Establish a network of safe bike paths and/or extensions of paved road shoulders around Town. Provide bicycle parking in and around Town, especially at the beach and the library.
4. Construct a hiking trail over the existing fishing trail on the West side of the river below the dam.

5. Create a waterfront brochure / trail map to describe the planning process, projects, trails, opportunities to volunteer / contribute. Keep brochure updated in order to orient people to the waterfront area and the waterfront access points. Estimated cost: \$8,500 (inc. printing).
6. Install better signage at the gravel parking lot by Heritage Park in order to identify the scenic view of the river and mountains. Estimated cost: \$1,000 - \$5,000.
7. Create a scenic pull-over area by Paleface that offers a view of the valley and mountains. Estimated cost: \$5,000 - \$25,000.
8. Widen the small boat launch at the beach to improve access for all, especially fire department water pumping vehicles. Estimated cost: \$15,000.
9. Establish canoe / kayak launches on the point of the beach and by the bridge. The Town could consider acquiring an easement for public access at the private property occupying the southeast corner of the bridge (now AS Sport Shop). Estimated cost: \$1,000.
10. Make improvements to Flume area, including enhancing the nature walkways on both sides of the Flume, improving the parking area by the Flume bridge, and installing a protected walkway along the bridge for viewing of the Flume. Estimated cost: \$210,000 (inc. design, contingency).
11. Install pay phones at beach and at the bridge park for safety and convenience.
12. Expand playground options to provide access for children under age 4, including slides and swings. Estimated cost: \$25,000

Hamlet / Town Revitalization

In order to succeed as a viable community and a regional outdoor recreation destination, the hamlet of Wilmington must be a vibrant and welcoming place for residents and visitors alike. This effort includes provision of public and pedestrian amenities, striving for continued economic development and improving the aesthetics and character of the community. The projects listed below will help Wilmington achieve the revitalization efforts necessary to create an attractive and functional downtown center.

Studies and Planning

1. Conduct a Marketing Plan to improve business and economic development efforts in Wilmington. Seek opportunities to extend the season for businesses and focus away from tourism to more long-term dependable high paying jobs. Work with Visitors' Bureaus, Chambers of Commerce, and other agencies to plan and implement business development in Wilmington's Town Center. Estimated cost: \$10,000.
2. Conduct a Town-wide Trail and Bicycle Connectivity Plan in order to promote safe bike ways along Town, County and State highways and to connect residential areas with the town center.
3. Identify and protect cultural heritage and resources by preparing a Historic Preservation Plan and updating the inventory of historic resources. In coordination with Wilmington Historical Society, review existing 1982 historic district inventory, update and expand list to include entire Town, and map the sites.

4. Seek opportunities to develop a community center that provides a gathering place for the community and enhances understanding of Wilmington’s history and natural resources, especially as it relates to the waterfront.

Town Action

1. Explore options for improving the availability of community gathering space. Seek community center space to include mini-museum of natural heritage and historical information, community involvement programs, local meeting spaces, and other uses.
2. Consider amending Town policies to request public, pedestrian, and bicycle access, paved shoulders, and/or pathways in all new developments and upgrades of existing developments. Create opportunities to upgrade existing roadways to include such access.
3. Provide community and worker housing within the hamlet center and water district by seeking opportunities to develop a variety of housing types to meet the needs of people at various stages of the life cycle, various income and age levels, and household composition. Explore and expand opportunities for creating workforce housing in cooperation with community trusts, Habitat for Humanity and other opportunities such as purchase of vacant lands.
4. Restore deteriorated and remove degraded features that detract from the scenic view, such as old signs, dilapidated buildings, etc.
5. Ensure the Code Enforcement officer has proper training to enforce all local regulations including zoning, stormwater, erosion controls, etc.
6. Improve litter control and maintenance on the beach itself and in other town park areas (for example tilling the beach to prevent grass growth). Estimated cost: 40 hours per week- 12 weeks @ \$15.00 per hour per year
7. Inform and educate businesses within the proposed Empire Zone about its benefits, and coordinate with NY Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA) and other economic agencies to market and promote Wilmington.
8. Engage and enhance historical understanding on the part of residents and visitors through interpretation programs and tours. Support the mission and goals of the Wilmington Historical Society and recognize their representation and participation in this endeavor as crucially important.
9. Encourage establishment of additional businesses in Wilmington, especially within the Empire Zone area in conjunction with the Marketing Plan recommended above, seeking support from the Industrial Development Agency. There is an established need and desire for recreational businesses (boat rentals, bike rentals) and shopping options for local residents.
10. Conduct efforts to reduce energy uses, promote sustainable practices, and implement the recommendations of the Energy Smart Community initiative. This includes encouraging all small businesses, religious uses, etc. to apply for an energy audit through NYSERDA, exploring improvements in vehicle efficiency and fuel use in official vehicles and among private citizens through energy efficiency incentives, group purchases with neighboring communities.
11. Improve affordable housing options by seeking housing rehabilitation funds, exploring opportunities to expand affordable workforce housing options, and creating tax reform scaled to support the needs of lower income residents.

12. Provide additional training as needed for Planning and Zoning Boards, especially in conjunction with the updates to the Town codes and laws proposed below.
13. Seek funding to hire a grant writer and administrator – perhaps in coordination with neighboring communities also in need of this service – to continue finding funds to support LWRP and other projects. Estimated cost: \$15,000-\$25,000 annually.
14. Encourage inter-municipal efforts for planning, economic development, water quality protection and other initiatives so that these broad issues can be addressed on a more regional level where feasible.

Physical Improvements

- Build historical/natural interpretive center and/or series of kiosks connected by trails near the entrance to Town Beach and around Town. This would help orient new residents and visitors to local natural resources, house maps of historical sites, bike trails, nature trails, cross-country skiing, canoeing and kayak area, etc. Connect this to historic bridge area and other areas in town center to encourage pedestrian activity. Town to do in cooperation with WHS and other organizations such as ASRA. Estimated cost: \$275,000 and up.
- Make enhancements to critical Town areas as follows:
 - Beach Area Improvements:
 - Convert restrooms to vandal proof, water efficient models (see Long Lake model). Estimated cost: \$75,000
 - Erect flag poles at beach, create a Wilmington town flag. Estimated cost: \$2,500.
 - Gateway Improvements:
 - Establish unified, unique decorative signage on all roads entering Wilmington and for other Town-related signage as appropriate. Estimated cost: \$25,000/\$30,000.
 - Add traffic speed monitor signs at gateway points in order to slow traffic, both for safety and to increase the likelihood that passersby will stop to visit the community and spend their tourism dollars. Estimated cost: \$15,000.
 - Streetscape improvements:
 - Plant trees along Route 86 through the town center. Estimated cost: \$20,000.
 - Work with utility companies to bury power lines in the most densely populated areas.
- Repair retaining wall near the library. Estimated cost: \$85,000 - \$150,000.
- Work with DOT to ensure that bridge stonework is maintained and repaired as needed.

Adoption of Local Laws and Regulations

In addition to the above listed projects, there are a number of local laws and regulations that the Town can use to ensure that the objectives of this LWRP are met by all new development, government actions, and local projects. Many of these laws are already in effect and simply need to be updated, while others may need to be created and adopted by the Town for the first time. These laws and regulations could include the following:

Zoning Code

Zoning is the tool that many communities use to most effectively guide development patterns within their boundaries. The Wilmington Zoning Code must be updated in order to ensure that future development does not have an adverse impact on the Town or its water resources.

Given Wilmington's natural beauty and location in the Adirondack Park, it is reasonable to expect demand for waterfront property to increase, and development pressures are already being felt. The current zoning code is out of date and is not compatible with the local program, and therefore could be updated in order to ensure that future development is consistent with the character of the community and that water quality is protected to the greatest extent possible. The Town should have a zoning code that will protect its beauty, character, and resources from unchecked or haphazard growth.

Incompatible waterfront zoning can be counter-productive when considering methods to ensure more beneficial waterfront development. When zoning does not foster a cohesive and appropriate pattern of development, it can allow valuable waterfront lands to be lost to inappropriate uses that detract from the connection to the waterfront.

Undertaking a Zoning Code update is an intricate process that involves determining a number of different issues and how they can best be addressed. The following is a list of items and suggestions recommended for discussion and review during a potential zoning update process. This list is not exhaustive, but will provide the zoning update committee with a good basis for beginning their work.

- Uses on the waterfront that are not compatible with the recreational and scenic value of the water should be prohibited. Such uses include, but are not limited to, industrial uses and other uses that are non-essential to the waterfront.
- Define what are considered "water-dependent" uses as the character of the shoreline changes and, where appropriate, encourage additional water-dependent uses by amending the zoning to ensure that water-dependent uses are allowed.
- Scale new residential development to be appropriate to the setting by amending the dimensional table in the zoning ordinance.
- Ensure that hamlet zoning allows for mixed commercial and residential use, encourages community center and pedestrian/bike use, encourages infill instead of sprawl, and highlights the relationship of new development or revitalized areas to the waterfront.
- Examine the allowable uses in the zoning ordinance to avoid such uses that would exceed applicable effluent limitations, cause or contribute to contravention of water quality classification and use standards, or adversely affect water quality.
- Avoid the loss of economic, environmental and aesthetic values of important recreation, open space and natural areas of Lake Everest, the West Branch of the Ausable River and the surrounding open space character by considering an overlay protection district that preserves these areas.
- Formulate sign regulations that contribute to the scenic beauty of the area.
- Encourage new development within walking distance of the historic bridge.
- Discourage sprawl along NYS Rt. 86.

Subdivision Regulations

Subdivision regulations are a land use control, used in coordination with the zoning code to carry out the desired development patterns of a community. While zoning regulations are meant to control the use of property, subdivision regulations address the quality of development. The way in which lands are divided plays a key role in the orderly development of a community. Properly administered subdivision regulations can be more useful in achieving planning goals than zoning ordinances.

The current Subdivision Regulations should be reviewed and updated, both to bring them into compliance with State law and to ensure that they reflect currently accepted best management practices.

APA Land Use Classification change for Hamlet area

One important recommendation of this LWRP is that the Town reviews its vision and goals, and the definitions of hamlet boundaries and land use designations, with the Adirondack Park Agency. The Town believes that it may be desirable to request that the Adirondack Park Agency “Hamlet” boundary area in Wilmington be expanded to match the Town “Village Center” boundary, and that Agency land use categories within Town boundaries reflect Town land use definitions. In order to properly determine the necessity for this Land Classification change, the Town should conduct a thorough review of the classification and zoning discrepancies. This would include:

- Conducting an inventory of vacant lands in and around the current APA designated Hamlet area to determine if an expansion is needed to ensure that appropriate future development occurs in this area,
- Mapping the location of the Water District Mains to see if they exist in the Town-designated Hamlet areas that are not classified as Hamlet by the APA,
- Discussing the Town’s vision for a hamlet center, its growth and development needs, and how an expanded Hamlet area would further those community planning objectives, and
- Analyzing the extent to which the existing areas that are not APA designated Hamlet areas meet the statutory criteria set for a Hamlet, as defined by the APA Act’s descriptions of the character, purpose, policies, and objectives thereof.

The land use categories of the APA and the Town are defined differently, as noted in Tables 1 and 2 (in Section II above), in terms of zoning limits on principal buildings per acre. Specific discrepancies that exist between the APA and Town land classifications have been mapped (see [Map 10](#) - Comparison of Local Zoning and APA Land Use Classification) and include the following:

1. Resource Management lands: these are classified by the town of Wilmington as either 3 acres, 5 acres, or 8.5 acres; APA zones these as 42.7 acres per building lot. One Resource Management area has no classification by the town of Wilmington. See Table A1.

Table A1. (APA) Resource Management Zone Definitions

Wilmington Classification	APA Classification	Acres
R3 – Moderate Residential	Resource Management - 42.7 acre lot size	174.7
R5 – Open Residential	Resource Management - 42.7 acre lot size	117.4
R8.5 – Rural Residential	Resource Management - 42.7 acre lot size	2233.3
No Classification	Resource Management - 42.7 acre lot size	13.4

2. To the east of Bilhuber Road are two sections of land classified by the Town of Wilmington as R1-Residential however the APA classifies it as Low Intensity (3.2 acres lot size) and Rural Use (8.5 acre lot size). See Table A2.

Table A2. (Wilmington) Residential Zone Definitions

Wilmington Classification	APA Classification	Acres
R1 – Residential	Low Intensity - 3.2 acre lot size	96.7
R1 – Residential	Rural Use – 8.5 acre lot size	6.2

3. To the South and North of Fox Farm Road are three significant sections of land classified as R1-Residential however the APA classifies it as Low Intensity or Rural Use (3.2 or 8.5 acres of Intensity Guidelines).

The Town plans to update its zoning and land use codes in the near future. One aspect of this zoning code re-write may include a request for an extension of the “hamlet” category as mapped by the APA, to match its own “Village Center” zone. The discrepancy in these classifications makes it difficult for the Town of Wilmington to approve simple projects within the functional hamlet area due to the added level of approval required by the APA. The intent of this change would be to give local control to the entire hamlet area as it has been established, in order to reduce confusion and logistical problems for issues relating to hamlet properties. The vision of the Town regarding economic development, hamlet revitalization, waterfront enhancement, and other community revitalization efforts will be easier to achieve if the land use classifications are brought into alignment. For example, Wilmington extends its Village Center area on Rte. 86 (between Wilmington and Jay) to the Bilhuber/Hardy Road, approximately ¼ mile beyond the APA hamlet boundary; and the Town would like to consider approximately one half-mile south of Fox Farm Road on the eastern side of Rte. 86 as low intensity, rather than rural use. See [Map 4- Village Center Zoning District and Unclassified Parcel Map](#).

As stated above, a complete review and evaluation of the need for this land classification change would be conducted before a request would be submitted to the APA. The nature of the Hamlet designation within the Adirondack Park is to provide communities with central development areas that function as centers allowing for residential and commercial development while preserving as many of the remaining lands in the park as possible. In the Town of Wilmington, nearly 60% of the land is classified in APA land use categories that allow no development whatsoever. In order for Wilmington to grow and sustain

itself over the long term, it is necessary to have a suitable amount of land available for development. Expanding the hamlet area in Wilmington will provide a concentrated area where that growth can occur, while still protecting the majority of the open space and natural areas in the community.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines are a set of standards and suggestions for land owners/developers to make improvements to their land that will enhance, or at the least not detract from, the visual qualities of the Town. These design guidelines can be as lenient as a simple guidebook for suggested design criteria, or as stringent as a set of mandatory regulations applied to all development, or somewhere in between,

A set of design guidelines for Wilmington would help to preserve and enhance views of the waterfront and shoreline from roads and public access areas by:

- Limiting blockage of existing visual or physical access
- Protecting “view shed” corridors from human activities by establishing guidelines for development or rehabilitation, especially on hillsides.
- Establishing vegetation or other screening for uses that could detract from the visual quality of the waterfront.
- Increasing visual access wherever practical.

Design guidelines can also be used to enhance the hamlet area by encouraging preservation of historic character and guiding the style and visual quality of development within the community.