

## MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR WATERFRONT

Enhancing Waterfronts to Revitalize Communities



New York State Department of State

*Photos on the front cover, from left to right: Greenport, Rochester, New York City, Braddock Bay*

## MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR WATERFRONT

Enhancing Waterfronts to Revitalize Communities



[www.nyswaterfronts.com](http://www.nyswaterfronts.com)

New York State Department of State  
Office of Coastal, Local Government  
and Community Sustainability

Albany, NY 12231

Telephone: 518.474.6000

E-mail: [coastal@dos.state.ny.us](mailto:coastal@dos.state.ny.us)

2009

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

## CHAPTER ONE:

### INTRODUCTION ... 1

- Who should read this guidebook
- About this guidebook
- How is the guidebook organized
- New York State Department of State - Division of Coastal Resources
- What is a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
- Looking ahead

## CHAPTER TWO:

### DEVELOPING A WATERFRONT VISION ... 7

- Planning for community involvement
- Understanding what you have to work with
- Developing a vision
- Reaching consensus on the vision
- Charting the course

## CHAPTER THREE:

### ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIPS ... 17

- Establishing partnerships

## CHAPTER FOUR:

### TAKING A LOOK AROUND ... 23

- Understanding what your waterfront has to offer

## CHAPTER FIVE:

### DEVELOPING A STRATEGY... 59

- Refining your vision and developing a strategy

## CHAPTER SIX:

### TAKING IT ONE STEP AT A TIME - FULFILLING YOUR VISION ... 67

- Ensuring success - organizing for implementation
- Project planning, financing, and implementation

## CONCLUSION ... 82

## APPENDIX ... 83

- Where to find potential partners for waterfront revitalization
- The Developed Waterfront
- The Natural Waterfront
- The Public Waterfront
- The Working Waterfront





*Wilson, Lake Ontario*

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

---



*Queens West, East River*



*Pittsford, Erie Canal*

## **With patience and persistence... You can make the most of your waterfront.**

New York State's waterfronts are exciting and diverse - from Niagara Falls to Montauk Point; from New York Harbor to the lakes of the Catskills and the Adirondacks; from the Delaware River to the Finger Lakes; and from the Hudson River and the Canal System to the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River. With ninety percent of the State's population and a wide variety of economic activities concentrated in the communities along its waterfronts - from the largest cities to the smallest hamlets - the waterfront plays a vital role in the lives of New Yorkers.

Our waterfronts are rich in natural resources - with abundant fish and wildlife as well as bluffs, beaches and, wetlands, forests, and farmlands.

More and more people are recognizing that their waterfronts can bring new life and energy to their communities. They are doing this by creating new economic activity, redeveloping historic and abandoned structures, improving waterfront recreation, and restoring and protecting natural resources. They have found that the keys to making the most of their waterfront assets include a clear vision and plan, broad public involvement, creative partnerships, patience, persistence and a step-by-step strategy.

One of the ways communities - whether they're a rural town or a New York City neighborhood - can take full advantage of their waterfront is by using **New York State's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program**. Through this Program, communities are building consensus and implementing visions for the future of their waterfronts.

These communities are part of a successful waterfront renaissance that is occurring throughout New York State. Helping you to achieve that success is the goal of this guidebook.



---

## Who should read this guidebook

This guidebook is designed to inspire and assist all New Yorkers - whether they are municipal officials, community or nonprofit organizations, businesses, or anyone with an interest in the waterfront - who want to make the most of what their waterfronts have to offer. Working together, these groups can revitalize a community's natural resources, as well as its built environment. This guidebook will help define the roles and responsibilities of each group as they come together in a partnership.

## About this guidebook

This guidebook is the print component of a multi-media package designed to provide readily accessible information on how to protect, restore and revitalize New York's coasts and waterways. The other components include a video and a website ([www.nywaterfronts.com](http://www.nywaterfronts.com)). This package will provide guidance on how to make the most of your waterfront - sharing lessons learned, specific techniques that have worked, sources of information and assistance, and the experiences of communities that have succeeded. The guidebook provides information on the benefits and requirements for participation in New York State's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and shows how a community can use a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program to help it achieve its vision. This multi-media package will be supplemented by similar packages of guidance that focus in more detail on specific community issues.

This guidebook is intended as an introduction to waterfront revitalization. Readers are encouraged to use this information to seek further advice by following the links to the relevant agencies.

## How is the guidebook organized

The sections of this guidebook follow a step-by-step process to help you make the most of your waterfront. These steps include:

- Developing a waterfront vision - highlighting the importance of generating a sense of community ownership of the waterfront and defining its future
- Establishing partnerships - showing how to strengthen the community's involvement in the revitalization of your waterfront and ensuring the key players are on board
- Taking a look around - helping you to understand your waterfront, its assets, and key issues and opportunities
- Developing a strategy - showing you how to pull it all together to fulfill your vision
- Taking it one step at a time - providing detailed guidelines for implementing your vision

These steps are appropriate whether the community is large or small; whether the concern is with one issue in one area or with a wide range of issues for a community's entire

waterfront; or whether the primary goal is waterfront redevelopment or natural resource protection.

The sequence in this step-by-step guide to enhancing your waterfront and revitalizing your community may not fit every community. You may want to create partnerships first, and then work together to understand your waterfront's issues, or you may want to wait until after you understand more about the condition of your waterfront to develop your vision. Taking a different approach is fine. The critical message is that all of these steps are important.

## New York State Department of State - Division of Coastal Resources

The Department of State's Division of Coastal Resources works with communities throughout New York State to help them make the most of what their waterfronts have to offer. The Division works in partnership with community groups, nonprofit organizations, and all levels of government to strengthen local economies, protect the environment and improve the quality of life. Whether you live in a rural town or a New York City neighborhood, you can take full advantage of your waterfront by working with the Division of Coastal Resources.

Since 1982, the Division has worked with local governments and communities to prepare Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs that define a local vision for the waterfront. The Division has

---

provided technical and financial assistance to communities for plans and projects that have expanded public access, reinvigorated urban waterfronts, restored habitats, and strengthened local economies. The Division is involved in a wealth of activities, including:

- Implementing the federal Coastal Zone Management Act in New York State
- Implementing the State's Waterfront Revitalization of Coastal Areas and Inland Waterways Act
- Developing Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs and Harbor Management Plans with over 200 municipalities
- Planning and technical assistance for redevelopment of buildings and deteriorated urban waterfronts
- Revitalizing community centers
- Regional planning for the Long Island Sound shore and the South Shore Estuary Reserve
- Protecting water quality through intermunicipal watershed planning
- Developing and applying remote sensing and Geographic Information Systems technology
- Interpreting coastal resources and promoting tourism

- Planning for the prevention and mitigation of coastal flooding and erosion
- Protecting and restoring coastal habitats
- Planning for the preservation of historic resources, maritime heritage, and scenic resources
- Implementing New York's coastal policies through consistency review
- Investing in improvements to waterfront areas through State and federal grant programs

You are eligible to participate as a partner in the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program if you are a coastal community - in other words, if your community is on Long Island Sound, the Atlantic Ocean, New York Harbor and the waters around New York City, the Hudson River, the Great Lakes, Niagara River or the St. Lawrence River; or if your community is located on an inland waterbody, such as a major lake, river or the State Canal, that has been designated by the State Legislature under Article 42 of the Executive Law.

As you organize your waterfront revitalization efforts, the Division of Coastal Resources can help in many ways:

- Organizing the planning process
- Establishing a waterfront advisory committee



*Hudson River from Olana*



*Northport, Northport Bay*



- Assisting with data collection and analysis
- Referring you to other communities that have successfully revitalized their waterfronts
- Providing guidance on developing appropriate waterfront revitalization policies
- Identifying and assisting with preparation of laws necessary to implement the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
- Providing grant funds

To find out more about partnering with the Division of Coastal Resources, please call 518-474-6000 or visit [www.nyswaterfronts.com](http://www.nyswaterfronts.com).

## What is a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

A Local Waterfront Revitalization Program is both a land and water use plan prepared by a community, as well as the strategy to implement the plan. The Program may be comprehensive and address all issues that affect a community's entire waterfront or it may address only the most critical issues facing a significant portion of its waterfront.

As a planning document, a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program is a locally prepared land and water use plan for a community's developed, natural, public, and working waterfronts. It provides a comprehensive framework within

which a community's vision for its waterfront can be formalized. Working in partnership with the Division of Coastal Resources, a community reaches consensus on the future of its waterfront, establishes local policies and outlines the implementation techniques it will use to achieve its vision.

As a strategy, a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program provides the organizational structure, local laws, projects, and on-going work that implements the plan. This is the part of the Program that will make the difference to your waterfront - it is the implementation that matters.

Completing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program can significantly increase a community's ability to attract appropriate development that will take advantage of, but also respect, the unique cultural and natural characteristics of its waterfront. Presenting a unified vision for the waterfront also increases a community's chances to obtain public and private funding for waterfront projects. Funding to develop and implement Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs is available from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund.

Once approved by New York State's Secretary of State, the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program forms the basis for coordinating the State and federal actions needed to achieve the community's goals for its waterfront. State permitting, funding, and direct actions must be consistent with an approved Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. Within coastal areas, federal agency activities are also required to be consistent with an approved

Program. This "consistency" provision is a strong tool that helps ensure all government levels work in unison to build a stronger economy and a healthier environment.

More and more people are realizing that their waterfronts are a catalyst that can bring new life and energy to their entire community. By developing and implementing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, these communities are making the most of what their waterfronts have to offer.

- The Cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda are working together to become the western gateway to the Erie Canal
- The City of Oswego has created a thriving mix of parks, marinas, and waterfront walkways, bringing new life to the downtown
- The Village of Greenport is reversing the decline of traditional maritime industries and restoring a deteriorated waterfront
- The Town of Essex is protecting its historic hamlet and resolving conflicts among recreational users of Lake Champlain
- The City of Kingston has created a thriving waterfront entertainment district

Through careful planning, these people are enhancing their waterfronts and revitalizing their communities.

---

## LOOKING AHEAD

### You can make the most of your waterfront when...

You see your waterfront as the way to bring new life and energy to your community.

You generate a sense of community ownership of the waterfront.

You know where you want to go.

You create a clearly defined vision for the future of your waterfront.

The people who live and work in the community buy into your vision.

You build a foundation of public support and confidence.

You establish partnerships and gain commitments from all stakeholders.

You know what you have to work with.

You take advantage of all your resources, assets, and opportunities.

You develop a detailed plan and strategy for implementing your vision.

You have the patience and persistence to work through the many phases of waterfront revitalization - one step at a time.



*Grand Ferry Park*



*Orient, Narrow River*



*Lake George*



*Greenport Harbor*



South Troy visioning workshop



# CHAPTER TWO:

## DEVELOPING A WATERFRONT VISION

---

In this chapter, you will work through the following steps:

- Planning for community involvement
- Understanding what you have to work with
- Developing a vision
- Reaching consensus on the vision
- Charting the course

Traveling around the State, you notice that other communities' waterfronts are thriving with marinas, parks, fishing piers, and other attractions that bring economic activity into these communities and enhance the waterfront for residents and visitors alike. You take a closer look at your own community. Could you redevelop that vacant waterfront parcel as a new business, perhaps as a marina? Are there ways of linking your main street with the waterfront to enhance access and enjoyment? You begin to see that making the most of your waterfront can revitalize your community.

At this stage, your ideas need to be developed and refined. Whether you are a local government, a neighborhood group, a community-based nonprofit, or an interested individual, you will need to turn your ideas into a shared vision for the future of your community's waterfront - to know where you want to go. More and more communities are doing this through the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.

### Planning for community involvement

Successful waterfront revitalization happens when the community realizes that the waterfront belongs to them. It happens when they recognize the significance and potential of their waterfront. It happens when they are determined to improve and protect their waterfront for the enjoyment and benefit of the entire community and future generations.

Right from the beginning, as you seek to make the most of your waterfront, you must involve the public. You will need the support of the community at every stage - from developing a vision to planning for and implementing improvements. Success will depend upon building and sustaining local support for the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.

Community participation can take many forms, but it is generally designed to:

- Foster an appreciation of local and regional coastal assets and issues
- Introduce local leaders and community residents to the waterfront planning process
- Generate a community consensus about the vision for the future of the waterfront
- Develop a strategy to address the community's most critical waterfront issues

Meaningful public participation doesn't just happen. It has to be carefully thought out and planned to embrace the public in the planning process and to keep them informed about progress. Now is the time to begin to develop ideas about how the community can participate in the planning process. To start, it is important to understand who should be involved.

### *Identifying the key stakeholders*

Stakeholders are critical. A stakeholder is a person or group who has something to gain or lose based upon the outcomes of your revitalization program. You will need to involve those individuals and groups, such as elected officials, business and civic leaders, neighborhood and environmental groups, and educational institutions who have a direct stake in the future of the waterfront. Make special note of the key leaders, and be sure to include those who may oppose your revitalization efforts as well as those who are likely to support them.

From the beginning of your efforts to revitalize your waterfront, you will be seeking out stakeholders and trying to define their role in making your vision a reality. In particular, you will want to seek out two groups with an interest in the waterfront - the experts and the enthusiasts. Experts are people with useful knowledge. Enthusiasts are people who will bring energy to the effort from either a civic concern, or from a business interest. Both types of people can help you get the job done and, as advocates, can help you reach consensus in the community.

---

You will need to create a strategy to effectively involve these stakeholders. Identify how you will approach each contact and be clear about why they are involved. Is it to keep them informed and seek their support? Do you need their funding help? Do you want them to participate on a committee? Be prepared, in advance, to address important issues and provide information about your waterfront, including how they can benefit. Once you have their involvement, keep in touch and make sure your project is on their front burner. By bringing people together you can create a vision that captures the ideas and interests of a broad constituency of those concerned with the future of your waterfront.

As you work to fulfill your vision, you may involve stakeholders and other community members in a wide variety of ways. These might include creating an oversight committee; creating a series of specific, issue-oriented subcommittees; encouraging participation in visioning and planning workshops; or “hands-on” participation in volunteer work parties. You will also need to keep the entire community informed about what is going on, including people who are not directly involved but may have a real interest in the waterfront revitalization efforts. It is important to provide them with regular progress reports, and keep them informed about how they can participate.

## *Selecting consultants*

Communities often hire consultants to supplement their own staff and volunteer resources or to gain use of special skills. At this stage, consultants can help with community involvement and provide an understanding of what you have to work with on your waterfront, so it is good to think about hiring a consultant before you get too far into the visioning process. Selecting a consultant involves answering some key questions, including:

- What do you want the consultant to do?
- What skills, expertise, and experience must the consultant have to carry out the project?
- How will you relate to the consultant? That is, will you simply give the problem to the consultant and expect a completed report? Or, will you provide staff support, citizen participation, review, or other input into the project?
- How experienced is the consultant in doing programs of this type? Has the consultant worked on waterfront and community revitalization programs and projects in communities similar to yours?

If you are seeking a consultant, you will need to prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP). Your RFP must meet all applicable procurement rules and be designed so that responses from consultants will provide all the information that

you will need to select and hire a consultant. Make sure you fully describe your needs and your planning proposal and a schedule for implementation. Make sure to request details of the consultant's experience on similar efforts. To ensure a comprehensive response, the RFP itself should be advertised as extensively as possible and mailed to a wide range of consultants. The Division of Coastal Resources can provide sample RFPs as well as guidance on what to look for when you seek a consultant to help prepare and implement a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.

After you receive the responses, set up interviews with potential consultants and talk with references. Find out more about them and their proposal, and try to determine how well they can achieve your vision. Find out why they are interested in your project and explore what they see as the main issues and challenges as they develop the plan. Fully explore the financial requirements of each consultant's proposal. Interviews are a great opportunity to develop an understanding of everyone's expectations and to set the stage for a strong partnership. Once you have selected your consultant and have executed a contract, it is time to begin developing your vision for enhancing your waterfront.

## Case Study: New York City

Using its Local Waterfront Revitalization Program ([www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/wrp/wrp.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/wrp/wrp.shtml)), New York City has the planning framework in place to help its neighborhoods achieve their vision of a vibrant public waterfront. The waterfront has become a magnet for thousands of people in places like South Street Seaport and Chelsea Piers.

Major new parks are being created at Queens West, Hudson River Park, Riverside Park and Brooklyn Bridge Park. New York City is working to connect these attractions in a City-wide greenway, and is adding new community parks in places like 125th Street in Harlem and Sunset Park in Brooklyn.

In Harlem, the community has taken the lead and a fresh approach to intense development speculation on the Hudson River at 125th Street, and is now promoting its own redevelopment vision. The community's vision of a waterfront park where families can enjoy a mix of activities, set in a vibrant neighborhood, was established with extensive public input. It builds on the existing assets within this area, such as the Fairway Market, the Cotton Club and the revitalized 125th Street corridor.

In Brooklyn's Sunset Park, residents have come together to promote the development of a waterfront park in a heavily industrialized area. The City and State have embraced their vision and are working to transform the vacant Bush Terminal and its decaying piers into an exciting waterfront destination.

Communities throughout the City have gone from thinking of the waterfront as off-limits, to realizing that the City's waterways are New York's last great open space.





---

## *Establishing an oversight committee*

Early in the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program development process, most communities establish a coordinating and oversight committee. In some communities, this may be handled by an existing board, such as the planning board or a conservation advisory commission, but more often a separate waterfront advisory committee (WAC) is established. The responsibilities of this committee generally include:

- Managing the waterfront revitalization process or advising staff on managing the process
- Providing valuable input on waterfront issues and existing conditions
- Holding regular meetings related to waterfront revitalization planning or project implementation
- Informing others in the community about the waterfront revitalization process and ways they can be involved
- Organizing and participating in focus groups, design charettes, visioning and action planning workshops, and public hearings
- Reviewing reports, designs, and other documents

- Keeping elected officials and municipal officials informed about the planning process
- Working with municipal staff, consultants, State agency staff, and others to complete various tasks

It is important to find committee members who are likely to stay with the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program from initial planning and visioning through to implementation of improvements. Take a look at the stakeholders you have identified: who are the key players, and who among them would be best suited to sit on an advisory and oversight committee? It is important to recruit the “movers and shakers” to be on the committee - those who others listen to and recognize as having the ability to get things done. Local leaders can provide valuable experience, advice, guidance, and resources, and will be able to persuade others to join and contribute to the waterfront revitalization efforts.

Look for an effective chairperson to lead the committee. The size of an advisory committee is also important to ensure productive group discussion. Ten to fifteen members is best, although a smaller group can also be effective. The committee may include representation from the following groups:

- Local government - elected officials; municipal staff; planning, zoning and other boards

- Neighborhood and community organizations, local and regional nonprofit organizations
- Property owners from waterfront neighborhoods
- Representatives from the business community, particularly those whose livelihood depends on the community's waterfront, such as tour boat operators, marina owners, commercial and recreational fishermen, boat suppliers and outfitters; chambers of commerce; merchants' organizations; and business improvement districts
- Tourism and promotion groups
- The academic community

If your Program involves several municipalities or an entire region, such as a watershed or highway corridor, the waterfront advisory committee must include representatives of each municipality. You must also look at a broader geographic base to involve all appropriate organizations.

## Case Study: Erie Canal

As the western gateway to the Erie Canal, the Cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda ([www.the-tonawandas.com](http://www.the-tonawandas.com)) were once a bustling shipping and industrial center. Reversing decades of decline, the Cities are using their Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs to realize their shared vision of becoming a destination on the Canal. Both planning efforts were directed by waterfront commissions comprised of representatives from the local business community, individuals with knowledge of recreational boating, and residents.

Each community prepared an inventory and analysis of existing land and water resources including opportunities and constraints for waterfront development. This analysis included review of a wide range of information about the built environment, natural resources, historic resources, municipal services, circulation patterns, environmental conditions, land ownership, and waterfront access. Based on this analysis, the Cities developed policies and projects that would revitalize and redevelop their waterfronts.

With assistance provided by the Division of Coastal Resources and the Canal Corporation, North Tonawanda and Tonawanda have improved their existing waterfront parks. As part of the first step in revitalizing their Canal waterfronts and enhancing their community, the Cities have received nearly \$4,000,000 to

develop conceptual plans for the Gateway Harbor Center; to construct docking facilities and repair the retaining wall and bulkhead on the Niagara River; and to construct an amphitheater and waterfront promenade and trail.

A key component in the success of their revitalization has been the participation of business leaders and continued community involvement. Taking it one step at a time, the Tonawandas are implementing their projects as funding permits, but always keeping in mind their shared vision of making the waterfront a special place for the community and visitors alike.





*Manhattan, Hudson River*



*Braddock Bay, Lake Ontario*



*Montauk Lighthouse, Long Island*

## Understanding what you have to work with

Creating a clear vision for revitalizing your waterfront requires an understanding of what you have to work with. This involves several key steps:

- Assessing your waterfront
- Knowing and respecting your community's heritage
- Taking full advantage of all your resources and assets

You can begin by taking a close look at your waterfront and talking to the waterfront businesses, residents, the local government, and community groups. They can provide you with valuable insights on your waterfront.

One approach for pulling together information about your waterfront is to use the SWOT Analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. By analyzing the information you have gathered and breaking it down into these four elements, you are better able to size up what you have to work with and what might be working against you. This analysis can help you determine the best mix of uses for your waterfront, what could be developed, and what resources should be protected.

To evaluate the existing condition of the waterfront and how it relates to the rest of the community, ask yourself:

- *S - What are the strengths of the waterfront?* Does your waterfront feature thriving maritime uses? Does it have good public access? Are there important natural resources? Does it include attractive historic features?
- *W - What are weaknesses of the waterfront?* Is your waterfront hard to get to from your downtown? Are there environmental constraints such as brownfields? Is the waterfront surrounded by deteriorating buildings? Is there adequate parking nearby?
- *O - What opportunities exist?* Could that vacant parcel become a park or a marina? Can your waterfront link with a regional trail system? Is there a future for any abandoned buildings?
- *T - What threats exist?* Are traditional waterfront uses, such as commercial fishing and marinas, threatened by redevelopment proposals, such as condominiums? Is an important wetland threatened by a road-widening plan? Is declining water quality impacting swimming or shellfishing?

Now that you have some understanding of what you have to work with, you can use this information to develop an initial vision for your waterfront. But remember, your vision will be refined as your understanding of your waterfront and its role in the community increases. In Chapter Four, you will gather more detailed



---

information about your waterfront, but first you must focus on your vision.

Making that vision a reality starts by asking yourself “*exactly what do I want to accomplish?*”

## Developing a vision

A vision is your idea of what your waterfront will become. A vision statement declares what you hope to accomplish. It can be any length - a single sentence, bullet points, or a paragraph - as long as it is clear, focused, and based in reality. Your vision statement might be:

Vision Statement for Kingston’s Waterfront:

*“The Kingston waterfront will be an attractive, active, walkable, culturally vibrant district with strong linkages to the rest of the City of Kingston. Shops, restaurants, recreational opportunities, museums, and events will attract visitors and residents seven days per week all through the year. New development will be consistent with established character and will highlight the area’s historic and natural resources. Trails, parks, marinas, and boat launches will maximize access to the waterways, creating high-quality recreational opportunities, and optimizing meaningful, permanent public access to the waterfront.”*

The vision statement is the starting point for action and it will be used throughout the waterfront revitalization process, from planning to implementation. Creating the vision statement

should be the time to think big, but avoid wishful thinking. A compelling vision for your waterfront can provide:

- A future to work toward
- Focus and direction for enhancing your waterfront
- Motivation to mobilize assets and resources in partnerships, based on a shared vision
- Excitement about the waterfront's future and its potential role in the community

Developing a vision process is an exciting and dynamic way to mobilize community involvement and support. Visioning should occur as early in the planning process as possible.

Community participation is key and a formal visioning process that is open to all community members and involves key stakeholders is the best approach. Visioning is most successful when participation is broad-based and ongoing. By bringing people together you create a vision that captures the ideas and interests of a broad constituency of those concerned with the future of your waterfront.

Visioning generally occurs in some type of workshop format that brings key stakeholders together in a constructive forum to share opinions and new ideas. Your waterfront advisory committee can provide this forum. A visioning workshop would be useful if:

- You see great potential in your area and know that others do as well
- You desire to get a group inspired and make them more cohesive
- You want a clear, agreed-upon way to keep a project focused

A successful visioning workshop depends on thoughtful planning and skillful meeting facilitation. Bring together the key stakeholders in a comfortable meeting environment. Explain the agenda and ground rules, stressing the importance of participation and respect for one another's perspectives. Define the scope of your vision - namely, what can our waterfront become? Given what you know about the waterfront's features and location, have people identify and define what they think the opportunities are for the waterfront. Given what you know about the waterfront's features and location - what is possible? Brainstorm ideas, but keep the waterfront as the focus. Don't set out to solve larger community issues. Have fun thinking up possibilities, but if it seems unrealistic, then scale back.

Use pictures, graphics, or designs as well as words to begin to pull together a statement of your vision. Careful wording is important, so don't worry if there's a lot of effort spent on choosing the right words, or making subtle changes. It may take several sessions and drafts to reach consensus. Once you have reached consensus, support your statement with a

---

visually appealing depiction of your vision for the waterfront. A professionally prepared and well presented graphic representation of your vision is a powerful tool. The final vision should state how the waterfront can be enhanced, and how it fits into the revitalization of your community. Everyone should be comfortable with what is said and how it is said.

You may want to refine your vision by establishing goals and objectives. Goals provide the direction, and objectives break these down into a series of achievable tasks.

Goals can be both short- and long-term, indicating the various milestones along the way. They should be descriptive and provide enough explanation for anyone to understand the nature of each goal. Your goals will be based on your initial understanding of your waterfront and its assets; but you will always be re-evaluating your goals as you move forward and discover more about your waterfront.

While goals are fairly broad in their scope, your objectives will be specific regarding how these goals will be achieved. There can be a number of objectives for each goal and, as you move through a project, objectives are achieved and new ones are added.

Consider our earlier example of the vision statement for the Kingston waterfront. Goals such as *“protecting historic resources, providing mixed uses, and developing recreational opportunities”* may be established for the waterfront.

The goal of *“providing mixed uses”* at Kingston’s waterfront would be followed by a series of objectives such as:

*“To develop a marina, five new retail storefronts, a restaurant and bar, all linked with public walkways along the creek.”*

By developing goals and objectives, you will help increase the community’s understanding of your vision for the waterfront.

## Reaching consensus on the vision

An integral part of the visioning process is building consensus - bringing people together in support of the common vision. You will always need to address the community’s ideas and concerns. Your success in revitalizing your waterfront will depend upon whether the people who live and work in the community embrace the vision.

There are many ways to develop consensus, but the key will be to sustain it. This is a long-term process requiring an outreach strategy to keep your community informed and involved in revitalization efforts. To build consensus and strong community support and begin to establish the partnerships that will be so important to your success, you may consider:

- Bringing the community to the waterfront to explain the vision and progress of revitalization efforts
- Publicizing early successes to highlight evidence of progress and build momentum and support

- Building press and media relations to inform the community of the vision and update them on the progress of revitalization efforts
- Starting a newsletter and establishing a regular mailing to the community to keep them informed on progress and to create a sense of involvement
- Producing a booklet, poster or brochure
- Launching a website to allow the community to stay up-to-date on the progress of revitalization efforts and obtain feedback from the community
- Holding community workshops, using an approach similar to the visioning process, to inform the community on the vision and update them on the progress of revitalization efforts

Remember, the vision statement is the starting point for action, but it is not set in stone. You will be able to refine the vision as you learn more about what you have to work with, find out more about your community, and discover if your vision is feasible. You can always modify the vision statement when new facts come into play. As you get further into the process, you will need to test the original vision against the realities, and, if an adjustment is needed, you should not hesitate to redefine the vision for the future of your waterfront.

## Case Study: Troy

The City of Troy has developed a community-based planning process to guide redevelopment of its Hudson River waterfront. Public involvement included over a dozen community workshops, two design charrettes and the active participation of an advisory committee. These meetings, involving hundreds of concerned citizens, have resulted in substantial support for waterfront enhancements from the community and the private sector.

The resulting plan outlines projects, incentives, and regulatory changes that will result in environmental cleanup; new green space and public access; transportation improvement; and new waterfront land uses ([www.troyny.gov/projects/brownfields/STWWRP.pdf](http://www.troyny.gov/projects/brownfields/STWWRP.pdf)). Troy's approach relies on partnerships among its private, public and nonprofit partners to make incremental improvements to the waterfront over the next 15 to 20 years.

The plan seeks to relocate existing heavy industrial users in the northern waterfront, where they now operate in close proximity to residential neighborhoods, to vacant and underused sites in the southern waterfront which offer convenient interstate access. The northern area will be freed to accommodate retail, new light manufacturing, commercial, and research and development uses. Public

improvements include a new waterfront park, trail, crew pavilion, and boat launch. Intensive buffering and creative design guidelines will be used to reduce land use conflicts and ensure that new development is consistent with historic neighborhood character. The entire waterfront will be served by a new waterfront bike and pedestrian trail. A new waterfront access road is currently being designed ([www.troyny.gov/projects/industrialparkroad/industrialparkroad.html](http://www.troyny.gov/projects/industrialparkroad/industrialparkroad.html)).

The City has modified its zoning and land use regulations to implement the plan and has tapped into numerous grant programs. The City has been successful in securing over \$12 million in funding to implement programs and improvements identified in the South Troy Revitalization Plan. These include Environmental Protection Funds to fund park planning and design; TEA-21 funds to build the waterfront trail; federal transportation funds to construct a waterfront access road; EPA funds for environmental site assessments and a job training pilot program; and funds from HUD Brownfields Economic Development Initiative for land assembly, cleanup, and relocation of industry ([www.troyny.gov/projects/brownfields.html](http://www.troyny.gov/projects/brownfields.html)).







Lake Champlain



Esopus Meadows Lighthouse, Hudson River

## Charting the course

Once you have reached consensus on your waterfront vision, it is essential to chart the course for the revitalization of your waterfront. You will need to turn your vision into a step-by-step strategy to guide you through plan preparation and project implementation. Ask yourself *“what tasks need to be performed to fulfill my vision and how will I handle them?”* Take the time to discuss and plan your approach to waterfront revitalization with your partners. This will help to strengthen both consensus and support for your project.

Develop a concise, action-oriented agenda that describes the steps that you will follow to implement your vision. View it as a scope of work for moving forward with the vision. To chart your course, you will specify the following:

- the tasks to be performed
- the techniques to be used
- the people to be involved and their areas of responsibility
- the time frame for action

By pulling these elements together, you can outline how your vision will be turned into a plan for the revitalization of your waterfront and how this plan will be implemented, one step at a time. This should be documented in writing, but don't go overboard with detail at this point. Keep it short and simple.

# CHAPTER THREE:

## ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIPS

---

In this chapter, you will work through the following step:

- Establishing partnerships

From the beginning of your project, you have been seeking out stakeholders who can make the vision for the future of your waterfront a reality. By bringing people together you have created a vision that captures the ideas and interests of a broad constituency of those concerned with the future of your waterfront. Now it is time to develop partnerships with these stakeholders.

### Establishing partnerships

A partnership is an agreement between two or more entities to work together for a particular purpose. You need to form partnerships if:

- You are pursuing goals that will affect other people and organizations
- You need more resources, whether financial, political, or human to accomplish your goals
- You want a strong coalition that shows how interests are in agreement

As you begin to develop partnerships, you will need to identify the key issues that bringing your waterfront back to life may raise for the community. Make sure that the stakeholders represent the divergent viewpoints on these

issues and can relate to how enhancing your waterfront will improve the community. Address challenges your community raises head-on, no matter how controversial they may be. If your stakeholder group is diverse and includes the range of opinions and concerns in the community, you will be better able to maintain community support and participation in your efforts. Put another way, if a small group of concerned citizens with diverse perspectives can agree on the benefits of waterfront revitalization, then the whole community can agree.

Success in waterfront revitalization requires partnerships with the common goal of achieving your vision and with the right blend of stakeholders from the private sector, all levels of government, and from the community. Important potential partners include:

- local and county government - elected officials, local boards, and staff
- adjacent municipalities
- regional planning or resource conservation organizations
- State and federal government partners
- academic institutions - colleges and universities, local schools
- representatives of businesses and industries in the surrounding area
- property owners in the surrounding area

- residents in the surrounding area
- community and neighborhood groups
- nonprofit organizations with a stake in the community and the waterfront

Remember, partnerships can be formed at any time as needs arise and as common interests are identified.

Partnering with these stakeholders can provide technical assistance, bring in more resources, help with site acquisition, improve infrastructure, assist with funding and marketing, generate extra publicity, and create the framework for waterfront revitalization. Particular attention should be paid to maintaining a strong relationship with neighborhood leaders and community stakeholders as these individuals and groups have a vested interest in the waterfront. Together, you are partners in the revitalization process and the investment of their energy and resources into the community has a powerful impact on your efforts.

The format and formality of a partnership can vary widely. Whether it is simple or complex, everyone benefits if an agreement is reached beforehand about each entity's role and responsibilities.

- Define the responsibilities of each party and its role in a written document such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).



*Chelsea Piers, Manhattan*



*Rochester, Lake Ontario*



*Troy, Hudson River*

- Negotiate any points of contention so that there is consensus.

Working in partnerships may seem to be more challenging or time-consuming, but generally leads to more successful revitalization initiatives. Having public support and the cooperation of more people and organizations also fuels the momentum of your efforts. During the visioning process, you achieved consensus by bringing people together to support your vision. As you develop partnerships you will continue to build on that support. Make sure you provide regular updates and opportunities to review the details of your plans. This can be done through action planning workshops, periodic informational meetings, newsletters, and other components of your outreach strategy. Remember, your success in revitalizing your waterfront site depends on whether the people who live and work in the community embrace the vision and the details of your plans as they emerge.

The Appendix provides details of the many partners - including local governments, regional organizations, nonprofit organizations, universities, and State and federal agencies - that could be involved in your efforts to enhance your waterfront and revitalize the community. The Division of Coastal Resources can help you develop these partnerships.

While you are likely to be aware of the local partners who will be needed to help you enhance your waterfront, you should take care to make

the best use of State and federal assistance as well. Many New York State agencies provide an array of technical and financial assistance that can support waterfront revitalization, from planning through implementation. The Department of State's Division of Coastal Resources can provide assistance on all aspects of waterfront and community revitalization to help you make the most of what your waterfront has to offer. For example, the Division can provide technical and financial assistance to help communities expand public access, reinvigorate urban waterfronts, restore habitats, protect scenic resources, preserve historic resources, manage water uses, improve water quality, protect against flooding and erosion, and strengthen local economies. The Division of Coastal Resources should be the first place to contact if you are interested in revitalizing your waterfront ([www.nyswaterfronts.com](http://www.nyswaterfronts.com)).

New York State's Smart Growth initiative demonstrates New York's commitment to working with local government and community organizations to find innovative solutions to strengthen our economy and environment, and improve the quality of where we live. Smart Growth is sensible, planned, efficient growth that integrates economic development and job creation with community quality-of-life, by preserving and enhancing the built and natural environments. Smart Growth encourages growth in developed areas with existing infrastructure to sustain it, particularly municipal centers, downtowns, urban cores, historic districts and older first-tier suburbs. The New



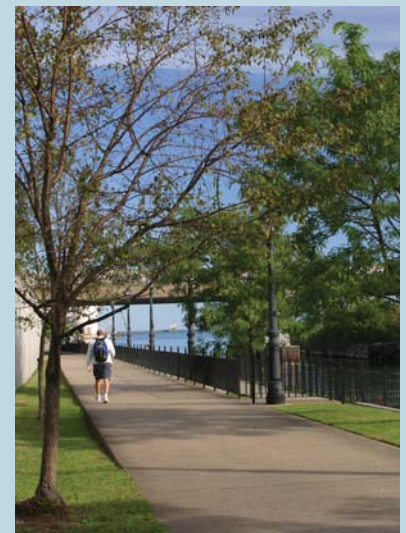
## Case Study: Oswego

The City of Oswego is redeveloping its downtown by building on its waterfront heritage. Oswego's vision was for a revitalized downtown and increased waterfront activity with new parks and promenades on Lake Ontario and the Oswego River. The City determined the best use of the waterfront by using community focus groups and involved all the stakeholders from planning through to implementation.

The Oswego Waterfront Revitalization Program Advisory Committee included elected officials, public agency and private industry representatives, members of private groups, and individuals interested in the waterfront. It was responsible for ensuring public participation in the preparation of a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, developing broad-based support for the Program, and coordinating its implementation.

Guided by its Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, Oswego has worked aggressively and creatively to convert neglected areas into a thriving mix of community parks, marinas, and waterfront walkways. The City has completed a mile-long walkway along the Oswego River ([http://oswegony.org/ABOUT\\_east.html](http://oswegony.org/ABOUT_east.html)) ([http://oswegony.org/ABOUT\\_west.html](http://oswegony.org/ABOUT_west.html)), improvements to Wright's Landing Marina ([www.oswegony.org/ABOUT\\_marina.html](http://www.oswegony.org/ABOUT_marina.html)), infrastructure improvements to increase the efficiency and use of the Port of Oswego ([http://oswegony.org/ABOUT\\_portauth.html](http://oswegony.org/ABOUT_portauth.html)), and additional public access and boating facilities with pedestrian connections to the pier and linear parks. At the same time, the City has connected the downtown with the waterfront and aggressively tackled the revitalization of abandoned buildings. These improvements provide employment opportunities and other economic benefits as well as public access for recreation and tourism.

Working with a wide variety of public and private partners, Oswego has realized this vision and is building on its success. Oswego's public improvements have leveraged nearly sixteen million dollars in private investment, and new projects continue to spin off from the activity that surrounds the waterfront.





*Pittsford, Erie Canal*



*Ditch Plains, Montauk*

York State Smart Growth website ([www.SmartGrowthNY.com](http://www.SmartGrowthNY.com)) is an easy-to-use directory or 'portal' to State agency programs with brief descriptions of services and links to the appropriate agency website pages. The website provides guidance on State agency assistance including grant and financial information, technical assistance, and data and regional inventories.

You will find information that can help you revitalize your waterfront, including economic development, revitalization, transportation and neighborhoods, conservation and environment, planning, technology, and partnerships.

The federal government also offers a range of programs that can help you revitalize your waterfront. The online Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance ([www.cfd.gov](http://www.cfd.gov)) gives you access to a database of all federal programs available to State and local governments; domestic public, quasi-public, and private profit and nonprofit organizations and institutions; specialized groups; and individuals.

Many of the nation's coastal management goals are addressed through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). NOAA works to protect marine fisheries and endangered species, produces charts to aid in air and nautical navigation, and partners with states to protect coastal resources through the federal Coastal Zone Management Program (CZMP). Authorized by the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, this program is administered by the Office of Ocean and Coastal

Resource Management (OCRM) (<http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov>) within NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOS). NOS is a source of support and information for coastal management including coastal and ocean science, management, response, restoration, and navigation (<http://oceanservice.noaa.gov>).

The CZMP (<http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/programs/czm.html>) is a federal-state partnership dedicated to comprehensive management of the nation's coastal resources, ensuring their protection for future generations while balancing competing national economic, cultural, and environmental interests. It addresses policy issues and provides state coastal management programs with technical and financial assistance in implementing their programs. New York's partnership with the federal government is managed by the Division of Coastal Resources.



## Case Study: Tioughnioga River Corridor

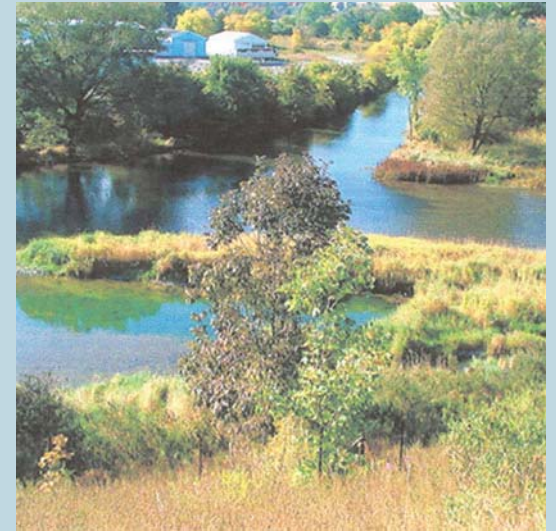
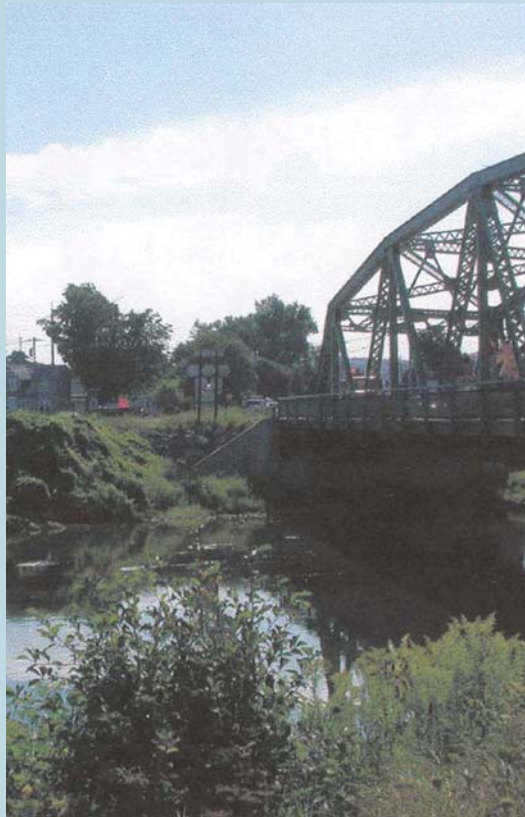
The Cortland County Business Development Corporation and Industrial Development Agency (BDC/IDA) is bringing scenic, historic, cultural, and economic resources together in a regional approach to waterfront planning and revitalization of the Tioughnioga River.

The BCD/IDA has convened a Waterfront Development Commission to focus on economic development, environmental conservation, tourism promotion, and community revitalization along the Tioughnioga River's 30-mile corridor. The Commission's members represent a wide range of interests and will design and implement a comprehensive waterfront revitalization strategy ([www.cortlandbusiness.com/rivertrail/strategy.html](http://www.cortlandbusiness.com/rivertrail/strategy.html)).

Using this strategy, the communities will develop cultural and historical attractions, agri-tourism, and retail and economic development opportunities. They will also create outdoor and recreational activities in the scenic river corridor, such as fishing, canoeing, kayaking, and hiking along a trail system with interpretive signage.

Planning and implementation involves partnerships between federal, State, county, and local officials; the private sector; community groups; and citizens. A \$50,000 grant from the New York State Environmental

Protection Fund Local Waterfront Revitalization Program for preparation of a comprehensive waterfront revitalization program has been the catalyst. More than \$1 million has been raised from a variety of sources including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the New York State Department of Transportation.







*Port Henry, Lake Champlain*

# CHAPTER FOUR: TAKING A LOOK AROUND

---

In this chapter, you'll work through the following step:

- **Understanding what your waterfront has to offer**

By developing your vision and generating a sense of community ownership of the waterfront, you have established a consensus on what you want your waterfront to become. Your success in achieving this vision will depend upon building on the assets of your waterfront. This means you must understand what your waterfront has to offer.

## Understanding what your waterfront has to offer

You should continue to gather information on your waterfront, its neighborhoods, and its role in the community, building on information you have already developed as part of the visioning process. Generally, this occurs through the preparation of a resource inventory that involves a careful, detailed review of waterfront conditions, issues, opportunities, assets, and challenges. You will need to gather and document information on natural, historical, cultural, archeological, recreational, and scenic resources; public services and facilities; population and socioeconomic characteristics; planning and zoning constraints; transportation patterns; and other relevant information. The resource inventory can be prepared by municipal staff, consultants, or community members.

A considerable amount of information about your community and its waterfront is usually readily available in existing reports, studies, and maps. In addition, start a dialogue among municipal staff; the community; consultants working on other projects in the community; and staff from regional planning organizations, nonprofits, and State agencies. This discussion should further the community's understanding of the waterfront and its issues. It will also help the community uncover potential opportunities for partnerships.

The range of information collected and reviewed should include the following:

- maps, including the New York State Coastal Atlas Maps, Planimetric or Topographic Series maps, and highway maps
- real property database, tax parcel maps, and municipal GIS data for determining land ownership
- aerial photographs and statewide ortho-photos
- comprehensive or master plan and other land use plans for your city, town or village
- municipal code, including the zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, and site plan review; flood management or flood hazard protection laws; wetland protection laws; historic preservation or architectural/design review laws; signage laws; and parking laws
- recently prepared reports, studies, statistical analyses, and grant applications
- previously completed waterfront studies and environmental impact statements
- hazard plans addressing flooding and erosion
- housing studies
- downtown revitalization strategies
- tourism studies, as well as tourism-related informational and promotional materials
- State and regional planning studies, such as the New York State Open Space Plan, New York State Preservation Plan, Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Long Island Sound Coastal Management Plan, South Shore Estuary Management Plan, Hudson River Valley Greenway Community Plan, Niagara River Greenway Plan, Canal Recreationway Plan, Scenic Byway corridor management plans, and Heritage Area management plans
- survey data
- recreation needs analysis, transportation studies, and housing market analysis

You can find the above information at your local government offices, various regional and State agencies, and at local libraries. Increasingly, this information is available on the Internet. For help



*North Tonawanda*



*Greenport*



*Oswego*



*Montauk, Long Island*

in finding this information, talk to the Division of Coastal Resources. You should also collect new information through interviews, field trips, and surveys. Remember, there should be a valid purpose or rationale for every item inventoried. In other words, you will need to know how you intend to use each piece of information to better understand your waterfront's potential.

Once you have collected and analyzed information about your waterfront assets, use the inventory to help people understand your vision. Be prepared to present this information in a short report with photographs, maps, illustrations, and tables of data describing the important resources and how they impact your waterfront vision. Support and document your conclusions. More detailed information on how to organize all of the data you have collected and assess your waterfront is provided in the following sections.



## Case Study: Amsterdam

In Amsterdam, a successful waterfront revitalization can be traced to two residents who wanted to make a difference in their community. After exploring the City, they decided to focus on waterfront revitalization. They placed an ad in the local newspaper inviting people to submit ideas on what they would like to see on Amsterdam's Erie Canal/Mohawk River waterfront. Spurred on by a substantial response that stimulated significant interest in the waterfront, the two organizers met with staff from the Division of Coastal Resources to see what they could do.

Amsterdam's Mayor appointed a waterfront advisory committee to assist the Division of Coastal Resources in preparing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. The committee included representatives with expertise and experience in the areas of historic preservation, recreational boating, economic development, and the local business community. The City's Planning Board and Urban Renewal Agency were also represented on the committee. Public input was gathered through community meetings and a more detailed resident survey regarding waterfront issues and priorities.

Key issues facing the City included the reuse and redevelopment of underused industrial structures on the waterfront; capitalizing on the recreational boating opportunities offered by the

Erie Canal/Mohawk River; developing improved public access and recreational opportunities along the State-owned Erie Canal right-of-way lands; overcoming the East-West Arterial and Conrail railroad as barriers to shoreline public access; and improving connections between downtown and waterfront areas. With funding assistance from the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, the City prepared conceptual designs for development of a waterfront park adjacent to downtown (<http://riverlink.adkinternet.com>).

As the City entered the implementation phase of waterfront revitalization, community organizers formed the nonprofit Amsterdam Waterfront Foundation to oversee waterfront revitalization efforts and fundraising, and to keep community residents involved. The Foundation has held several formal dress balls in the State Armory in Amsterdam to increase public awareness of waterfront planning activities and to raise money that could be used to implement projects and match State grants. Representatives from the City and the Amsterdam Foundation have continued to meet regularly and work with State officials to keep them informed of Amsterdam's progress while reminding them of the continuing need for grant funding.

Over the past twelve years, Amsterdam's public/nonprofit waterfront collaboration has produced dramatic results: both sides of the Mohawk River have been improved with pedestrian trails, parks, bocce courts, and

picnic pavilions. A bridge, allowing pedestrians to safely cross the East-West Arterial and Conrail railroad tracks, provides excellent views of the Mohawk River and downtown Amsterdam. Planning to build on their strong record of success, the City recently began the process of updating its Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.



---

## Defining the waterfront study area boundaries

You should establish a geographic boundary for the community's waterfront study before you get too far into the inventory, as a way to focus planning efforts. This waterfront boundary should:

- Follow recognizable natural or cultural features such as waterways, streets, and railroads to the greatest extent possible.
- Include land uses that affect or are affected by waterfront issues, problems, and opportunities.
- Include natural and cultural resources with a physical, social, visual, or economic relationship to the waterfront.
- Include waterside boundaries, generally following the waterside boundary of the municipality, which is located either at the water's edge or at a specified distance out from the shoreline into the water. In some cases, as part of a harbor management plan, waterfront boundaries may extend 1,500 feet offshore and may extend beyond the boundaries of the municipality.

Waterfront study area boundaries will vary from community to community. In some places, the boundary will be drawn fairly close to the shoreline. In others, the boundaries will include the entire municipality. The purpose of the boundary is to help define your area of study and to ensure that you are covering all of the key

features that will help define your waterfront. As you begin to understand your waterfront area, it may be useful to break your study area into smaller sub-areas in order to focus on a specific resource, use, or area in more detail.

If you are a coastal community, as indicated in the Introduction, a good starting point for establishing a geographic boundary is the New York State Coastal Area Boundary. Developed by the Division of Coastal Resources as part of New York State's Coastal Management Program, this is a legally defined boundary line that defines the State's coastal area. It is available from the Division of Coastal Resources ([www.nyswaterfronts.com](http://www.nyswaterfronts.com)), or can be reviewed at the New York State Library. Keep in mind that this boundary can be refined to reflect local needs. If you are a community located on an inland waterway, there is no designated boundary and you will need to establish your own boundary. In either case, communities should work with the Division of Coastal Resources to establish their waterfront study area boundaries. If you choose to develop a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program this boundary will then be incorporated into the Program.



*Manhattan, Hudson River*

## Assessing your waterfront

One of the best ways to organize the data you collect, and to understand your waterfront's assets, is by looking at your waterfront from four perspectives: the developed waterfront, the natural waterfront, the public waterfront, and the working waterfront. Each waterfront type has its own intrinsic value and its own set of concerns and constraints, but they are also critically entwined. In the following sections you will find details on each of these perspectives, including the information you will need to gather, the questions you will need to answer, and the suggestions for approaches that you should consider as you continue to refine your vision for enhancing your waterfront to revitalize your community.

### The Developed Waterfront

New York's waterfronts have had a long history of development, creating a legacy of centers of agricultural, industrial, commercial, and recreational activity; traditional harbors; and stable residential areas of varying densities - all intermixed with natural areas of woodlands, fields, wetlands, bluffs, and beaches. This history has led to a sense of place that varies with the character of individual communities throughout the State. These characteristics of the developed waterfront contribute to the economy, culture, and heritage of the State. As you assess a developed waterfront, you will need to focus on land use and development, the challenges of tackling abandoned sites and buildings, and the protection and restoration of natural, historic, and scenic resources.

### ***Land use and development***

As stated earlier, much of community character is defined by the existing patterns and style of development. Without careful attention, those elements that give a community its sense of place can be threatened by inappropriate new development and redevelopment. Three different types of development trends exist within New York's waterfronts:

- Modest infill development in stable, almost fully developed waterfront areas
- Redevelopment of significantly sized deteriorated, abandoned, and underused areas in urban or previously developed waterfront areas
- New development in previously undeveloped areas

These development trends need not impair the community character or the sense of place of the individual communities. However, to ensure that any change maintains or enhances community character, the impacts of new development, redevelopment, and, indeed, existing development, must be managed to meet the demands of environmental improvements and quality communities.

In assessing land use and development patterns and trends in a developed waterfront, you will want to understand:

- What historical and development factors made your waterfront and community the way it is now?
- What do you value about your waterfront?
- What changes are going on and could occur in the future?

In many cases, your community will already have addressed these factors through comprehensive master planning for the community. If so, you will need to take this information and focus on the waterfront. If your community does not have a master plan, you will need to begin by gathering land use, demographic, and development data. In either case, you will need to know about:

- the history of the development of the community
- land use patterns
- land ownership patterns
- zoning regulations
- demographic trends
- employment and business data
- development trends
- transportation and accessibility
- community facilities



*Greenport, Stirling Basin*



*Troy Marina, Hudson River*





*Atlantic Ocean Beaches, Montauk*



*North Tonawanda*



*Shelter Island Ferry*

- utilities - power, water and sewerage
- abandoned, deteriorated, or underused sites and buildings
- the location and condition of open spaces, public access, and recreation sites
- the location and condition of natural resources
- the location and condition of historic and scenic resources

It is useful to map these features and to document development and land use issues through photographs.

Once you know how your waterfront developed - and understand the current land use patterns, development trends and the opportunities and constraints for development - you will need to focus on how your community will develop in the future. What role can the waterfront play in enhancing the community? Some questions you will want to ask are:

- Condition - What is the condition of the waterfront? Does this condition limit or enhance options for making the most of the waterfront? What factors led to its current condition?
- Compatibility - Are the development patterns and trends compatible with your vision of the waterfront? Does current zoning accomplish this vision? Is the

infrastructure adequate to accomplish this vision? Are improvements needed?

- Opportunities - Are there development opportunities or proposals? Does zoning permit these? Does the community support new development? Is the infrastructure adequate to support development?
- Use - Why did a site or building become abandoned, deteriorated, and underused? How long has this situation existed? Are the sites contaminated? What interest has there been for acquisition and reuse? What are the primary obstacles to reuse? What opportunities can be identified?
- Access - Is the waterfront accessible from downtown? Are there opportunities to improve connections?
- Infrastructure - How accessible is the waterfront from public transportation? From major highways? Does the waterfront have sufficient parking spaces?

As you seek to make the most of your waterfront and better your community, your approach should be to enhance existing development and focus new growth and development to protect and improve community character. You will need to review your land use regulations, establish capital improvement programs, and provide incentives for private development that are guided by the following objectives:

- Forge links to the waterfront's rich cultural and natural legacy
- Provide a sense of continuity with the past
- Respect and incorporate cultural and built heritage
- Decrease the risk from flooding and erosion
- Create physical links with downtown centers and upland neighborhoods
- Bring new uses to abandoned buildings and brownfield sites
- Emphasize the clustering of structures and uses
- Consider relationships among buildings, open spaces, and the water
- Encourage a scale compatible with the surrounding community or landscape
- Encourage a mix of uses, but minimize conflicts with neighboring uses
- Protect vistas and views of the waterfront
- Protect important open spaces and natural areas
- Develop partnerships with the private sector and nonprofit organizations to encourage appropriate development

While your assessment of waterfront land use and development should include the topics listed above, three more critical factors require a closer look - abandoned sites and buildings, historic resources, and scenic resources.

### ***Abandoned sites and buildings***

Many of New York's communities are dotted with vacant and abandoned industrial sites and older and historic buildings that are often no longer in use. Abandoned sites and buildings can have a destabilizing effect on neighborhoods, lowering property values and precipitating further disinvestment by property owners who fear that improvements may not pay off if the neighborhood continues to decline. But in a growing number of cases, people with a vision are transforming these sites and buildings into cost-effective spaces for new uses and turning once derelict areas into new, vibrant destinations. These projects are producing jobs, stimulating private and public investment, providing attractive spaces for new uses, and creating destinations that draw residents, visitors, and new business activity to downtowns and neighborhoods.

If you have identified abandoned sites in your community, you have probably realized that these sites offer great redevelopment opportunities. Known as "brownfields," these sites are typically abandoned or underused industrial or commercial properties where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.



*Syracuse*



*Sunset Park, Brooklyn*



*Greenport*

If you think your site might be a brownfield, New York State can help with technical and funding assistance. The Department of Environmental Conservation has produced a series of fact sheets on remediation ([www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8661.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8661.html)) and a brownfields manual that provides assistance to municipalities and the private sector for the redevelopment of brownfield sites ([www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8641.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8641.html)). The Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program, administered by the Division of Coastal Resources in partnership with the Department of Environmental Conservation, provides communities and qualified community based organizations with assistance to complete area-wide brownfields redevelopment planning. Through the Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program, communities have the opportunity to address a range of problems posed by multiple brownfield sites and to establish the multi-agency and private-sector partnerships necessary for



*Orient, Long Island*

leveraging assistance and investments that revitalize communities - returning idle areas to productive use and restoring environmental quality ([www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8447.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8447.html)).

If you have identified abandoned buildings in your community, the Division of Coastal Resources guidebook “Opportunities Waiting to Happen: Redeveloping Abandoned Buildings and Sites to Revitalize Communities” can help you. This guidebook describes the development process, and the techniques and resources available to redevelop abandoned buildings, beginning with developing a vision for your building and finishing with a step-by-step guide to project implementation. Each of the sections provides guidance and lessons on how to make opportunities happen. Contact the Division of Coastal Resources at (518) 474-6000 if you would like a copy of this guidebook, or visit [www.nyswaterfronts.com/communities\\_guidebook\\_ab.asp](http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/communities_guidebook_ab.asp).

### **Historic resources**

Many important historic structures and archeological sites, both on land and underwater, are found in New York's waterfront communities. An integral part of making the most of your waterfront is to protect, preserve, and sensitively reuse your community's historic resources. As historic resources are limited and irreplaceable, public or private uses and activities should avoid destroying or damaging any site having historic or cultural value. In addition to giving a community its unique character, older and

historic buildings and historic districts offer considerable opportunities for economic growth through heritage tourism and building rehabilitation. The economic benefits of historic preservation should not be overlooked.

In assessing your historic resources, you will want to identify all of the elements that are important in the history of the development of your community, including:

- Any historic resource listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Information about listings on the National and State Registers of Historic Places can be obtained from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation ([www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/register](http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/register)). You will also want to identify any resource nominated for, or eligible to be listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places, since these are considered equally significant resources.
- Any locally designated historic resources, which may also include districts and structures that are also on the State or National Registers.
- An archeological resource listed in the State Department of Education's or Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's inventory of archeological sites. For security reasons, the specific sites of archeological resources should generally not be made public.



- A resource that is a significant component in a State-designated Heritage Area.
- Known shipwrecks are another important resource. Divers in your area will often be familiar with their location.

If the above information is limited or nonexistent, it may be because your community has never been formally surveyed. If this is the case, you should consider surveying buildings in the waterfront neighborhoods to determine areas that may be historically significant. The Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau ([www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo](http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo)) of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation will be able to assist communities in determining what waterfront areas are historically significant. You will also want to compile a brief history of the development of your waterfront. The local historical society may be able to provide this information.

Once you know the history of your waterfront and have identified your historic resources you will need to determine how best to protect them and define what role they can play in enhancing your waterfront. Some questions you will want to ask are:

- What is the condition of structures or sites of historic significance? Are they in or near original condition, easily restorable, significantly altered, derelict, or vacant? Who owns them? What are they used for now?

- If the buildings are not in use or are underused, what new use might be appropriate given their nature and economic realities in your community?
- What is the level of protection afforded the historical resource? Listing on the State or National Registers only requires that the actions of federal and State agencies be protective of the listed resource. Private or local government actions are only affected if there is a local law establishing standards to protect historic resources. How effective are local law protections, if any? The Secretary of the Interior has established standards of protection that guide federal and State agency decisions. These are a useful guide in judging the adequacy of any local standards, particularly where there are numerous historic resources ([www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/rhb/stand.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/rhb/stand.htm)).
- What themes, events, styles, and/or notable people can be drawn from the history of the community to guide new development and activities?
- Do people know about any underwater resources, particularly shipwrecks, and are they being respected by divers?

The following are some of the approaches you will want to consider to understand, protect, and make use of your historic resources.



*Olana State Historic Site*



*Essex*

- Seek listing of historic resources not already on the State or National Registers, and/or local designation. Buildings individually listed, or listed as contributing members in historic districts, may be eligible for tax credits, grants, and other incentives ([www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/investment](http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/investment))
- Enact or strengthen a local historic preservation law, if necessary ([www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/pdfs/hispres.pdf](http://www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/pdfs/hispres.pdf))
- Work with the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation to protect historic resources through the Certified Local Government Program ([www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/certified](http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/certified))
- Work with preservation organizations to provide information to owners of historic resources about the benefits of appropriate restoration and the resources available to accomplish such restoration
- Work with business and development interests to find new uses for your historic buildings
- Identify regional tourism organizations with whom you can work to attract visitors to your significant resources, particularly those that fit into a regional theme, such as military history, maritime history, or industrial history ([www.heritage.ny.gov](http://www.heritage.ny.gov))
- Create events and interpretive programs that celebrate your history and the buildings and places that make it real today

### **Scenic resources**

Of the waterfront's many attributes, its scenery is perhaps the most universally appreciated. Scenic resources are a major component of community character, and special landscape features and views contribute to a community's visual quality. In order to protect community character, the scenic characteristics of your waterfront and community need to be considered when making planning and development decisions.

In assessing the overall visual characteristics of your waterfront, you should take a look at:

- Your waterfront's physical character: its
  - landform, vegetation, shoreline configuration, and water features
- Your waterfront's cultural character: its
  - land use, ephemeral characteristics, historic character, symbolic value/meaning, architectural character, landscape character, state of upkeep, and discordant features
- Important waterfront views in your
  - community: identify the viewshed, length and breadth of views, background, composition, and focal points

It is useful to map these features and to document views and critical scenic components through photographs.

The Division of Coastal Resources has developed a scenic assessment methodology to determine scenic quality and has a program to identify, evaluate, and recommend areas for designation as Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance (SASS). It identifies the scenic quality of the components of coastal landscapes and evaluates them against criteria for determining aesthetic significance.

The first application of the scenic assessment methodology has been in the Hudson River Valley coastal region, where six Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance have been designated. Each area encompasses unique and highly scenic landscapes that are accessible to the public and recognized for their outstanding quality. If your community is in the Hudson Valley, the information in the SASS designations will help you understand your scenic resources. The approach could be easily applied in other regions and can be modified to assess scenic quality in an individual community, as has been done in East Hampton on Long Island.



*Breakneck Ridge, Hudson Highlands*

---

After you have identified your community's scenic resources, you can ask yourself how they can be improved or protected. Remember that scenic resources are tied to other values; the open spaces might be working agricultural landscapes, the harbors and marinas part of a working maritime waterfront, the wetlands and woodlands are important natural habitats. Scenic qualities combine with recreational possibilities to make the coast a prime location for vacationers, offering the potential for growth of the tourist industry as well as helping to make the waterfront attractive for residential and economic development. One of the challenges will be balancing these competing issues to protect scenic quality.

Although many communities have recognized the value and benefits of scenic resources, protection and management of these resources has not always been effectively accomplished. Development projects often ignore scenic issues, individually or cumulatively degrading waterfront landforms and attractive human-built features. Impairments occur when:

- Natural features and architectural details are modified
- New structures reduce or prevent views
- The scale, form, or materials of development are not compatible with surroundings

Large scale development - whether industrial, commercial, or residential - is most likely to affect aesthetic characteristics, but even a single structure can significantly impact the scenic quality of an area. Indirect impacts may result from infrastructure and activities that accompany development, such as power lines, transportation networks, bill boards and signs, and deteriorated properties - leading to reductions in scenic quality.

The most serious reduction in scenic quality occurs when development blocks the view of the water. This is especially an issue in urban areas, where the built-up character of the waterfront already limits visual access. The problem also exists in more rural areas where development along the waterfront can prevent visual access to all but waterfront property owners.

Local government land use regulations are perhaps the most effective way to protect scenic resources. The location, massing, and design of new waterfront development can be limited by zoning and site plan regulations. Standards that require buildings to be sited to protect views to or from the water can be adopted. When development is unavoidable in a prominent scenic location, approval by the Planning Board for site plan review, and by the Architectural Review Board should be required to maintain the existing scenic quality of the area. Typical guidelines for siting structures and facilities that could be included within local regulations include:

- Set-backs - structures and development should be set back a defined number of feet from public view points such as roads, parks, and especially shorelines; kept out of sight-lines to scenic views; and sited in inconspicuous locations to maintain the attractive quality of the shoreline and to retain views to and from the shore.
- Clustering - structures and lots in subdivisions should be clustered or oriented to retain views, save open space, and provide visual harmony.
- Visual compatibility - the degree of congruity or "fit" between the visual elements of a project and the setting in which it is located, should be considered in the planning process to minimize the visual impacts of development.
- Historic Preservation - existing scenic structures, especially historic structures, should be incorporated into new development so that views of and from these structures are preserved. View corridors should be incorporated into waterfront development.
- Restoration or Removal - unattractive scenic elements should be removed or restored when they deteriorate or become degraded.
- Maintenance - original landforms and historic landscapes should be maintained or restored wherever possible.



- Landscaping - areas of vegetation, especially native vegetation, should be maintained or added to through scenic and conservation easements, or landscaping plans, and used to provide interest, encourage the presence of wildlife, blend structures into the site, and obscure unattractive elements.
- Open up views - selective, ecologically based clearing should be evaluated to create views of coastal waters from public lands.
- Screening - as a last resort, appropriate materials, other than vegetation, should be used to screen unattractive elements.
- Design - buildings and other structures should be of an appropriate scale, and use forms, colors, and materials to ensure they are compatible with and add interest to the landscape and integrate development with the landscape.
- Lighting - light pollution of the night skies should be avoided by encouraging use of least-polluting light sources; fixtures, including municipal lighting installations for street lighting, parking lots, ball fields, etc., should be properly shielded and aimed at the ground; improvements in lighting control regulations for localized sources should be considered and better enforced.

Another way of protecting scenic resources is the conservation of open space, natural areas,

and cultural resources through capital spending by federal, State, or local government, either directly or through grant programs. Partnerships with local landowners and businesses and with nonprofit organizations, particularly land trusts and environmental organizations, can also help communities to protect scenic resources.

As you examine your scenic resources, take a closer look at the road corridors that cross your community. The New York State Scenic Byways Program designates transportation corridors that are of Statewide interest. They are representative of a region's scenic, recreational, cultural, natural, historic or archeological significance to the State of New York. With the required corridor management plan in place, the Scenic Byways Program can help conserve and enhance the byways' underlying resources as well as encourage appropriate tourism and economic development. The program is administered by the Landscape Architecture Bureau of the New York State Department of Transportation ([www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/programs/scenic-byways](http://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/programs/scenic-byways)).

### **The Natural Waterfront**

New York's natural waterfronts are comprised of a rich diversity of resources that support economic productivity, are a source of scenic beauty, and provide recreational enjoyment. These waterfronts are an integral part of larger ecosystems that sustain and complement human activities throughout the State. As you seek to make the most of your waterfront, it is critical to recognize the importance of maintaining

ecological integrity and natural coastal processes, and improving management of living resources and water quality. The three major factors in assessing the natural waterfront are: flooding and erosion hazards, preserving and improving water quality, and protecting and restoring habitats.



*Ontario Dunes, Lake Ontario*



*Braddock Bay, Lake Ontario*

### ***Flooding and erosion hazards***

Shorelines are dynamic places. Weather systems generate wind, waves, rain, and other forces that affect shorelines. Accompanying the weather systems are environmental effects including storm surge, overwash, flooding, and erosion that create a complex array of coastal hazards wherever development occurs near the shore. Remember that where they do not pose risks to life and property, these hazards are simply natural events with positive effects on the coastal environment.

Natural protective features such as floodplains, wetlands, offshore bars, beaches, dunes, and bluffs help to protect the shoreline by absorbing storm energy and flood waters. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of these natural protective features are impeded by structures and development. Coastal hazards are created when development is exposed to risk of loss or damage by natural events.

In assessing the flooding and erosion hazards in your waterfront, you should take a look at:

- The extent of any federally designated Flood Hazard Areas, floodways, coastal high hazard areas, and Coastal Barrier Resources System units
- The extent and nature of any State-designated Coastal Erosion Hazard Areas
- The extent of other flooding and erosion risk areas

- The coastal processes at work on your shoreline
- The location of natural protective features such as wetlands, dunes, and bluffs
- Upland topography
- Inland and shoreline development patterns
- Land ownership details
- Regional weather conditions and historic weather patterns
- Information presented in published scientific reports for your shoreline
- Navigation charts and bathymetric information
- Data on historic shoreline change and any ongoing shoreline monitoring initiatives
- Location, extent, and condition of shore protection structures
- Records, photos, and anecdotal information on past shoreline conditions and storm events

It is useful to map these features and to record shoreline development, erosion control structures, and natural protective features through photographs.

Management of hazards related to flooding and erosion is a critical concern if you live, work, or



*Montauk, Long Island*



*Sailors Haven, Fire Island*

---

depend on New York's coasts and waterways. These hazards extend across wide geographic areas and cannot be addressed on a piecemeal basis. Because the level of development and type of hazard exposure varies by locality, and the land use planning tools to manage hazards risks are locally administered, local government is often the primary forum for addressing waterfront hazards. The best approach to hazard management is to develop a community plan to address potential hazards. This local focus is best supported through partnerships with federal and State programs that provide basic standards to manage flooding and erosion hazards and a context for local management of hazard risk.

The primary questions to ask as you address shoreline hazards are:

- What are the types, frequency, and scale of the hazards?
- How will the hazards change over the course of time?
- Which areas, buildings, public facilities, institutions, and vulnerable populations (elderly, disabled, low income) are at risk?
- What are the risks to water-dependent uses?
- What are the risks to the transportation network?
- What other areas are available where development might be directed as the community changes over the course of time?

- Are these potential hazard areas?
- What natural resources are at risk?
- What mitigation measures are available to reduce future hazard risk?

Risk assessment is important for understanding the nature of shoreline hazard exposure. Risk varies with topography, weather, exposure, geology, previous shore protection efforts, and local conditions. Certain types of risks may be acceptable for one community but not for another. For instance, periodic shallow flooding without significant structural damage may be an acceptable risk if long-term safety is reasonably certain.

Different approaches to coastal hazards may be appropriate according to the nature of the risk and the adjacent use. New York State legislation (Article 42 of the Executive Law and Article 34 of the Environmental Conservation Law) gives priority to nonstructural measures, including the management of development to avoid hazard areas. Nonstructural approaches maximize protection afforded by natural processes and features. They offer the best opportunity for dependable long-term risk reduction, require the least long-term maintenance, and have the least detrimental effects on other coastal and waterfront resources and uses. On the other hand, structural measures may be the only viable option for highly developed urban areas and water-dependent uses. However, they require repeated maintenance and additional management measures, leave development exposed if conditions occur that exceed structure

capacity, and have negative impacts on other resources and other locations.

The following are some of the approaches you will want to consider to protect your waterfront from flooding and erosion and minimize the threat from coastal hazards:

- Siting - avoiding the inappropriate siting of structures in hazard areas
- Protection - protecting the natural dynamics of changing shorelines and maintaining and improving the natural features and resources that protect against flooding and erosion
- Nonstructural measures - using nonstructural measures to minimize damage to natural resources and property from flooding and erosion, including:
  - *reviewing setbacks to ensure the siting of new buildings and accessory structures outside of Flood Hazard Zones and Coastal Erosion Hazard Areas*
  - *relocating existing buildings and accessory structures landward to remove them from Flood Zones and Coastal Erosion Hazard Areas*
  - *elevating or flood proofing existing buildings and accessory structures*
  - *stabilizing bluff, dune, backshore and beach formations with appropriate plantings of native vegetation including beach grass*



- Drainage - installing drainage devices to control water flowing over bluffs and bluff faces
- Nourishment - artificially nourishing bluffs, dunes, backshores, and beaches
- Usage - limiting the use of hard structural erosion protection measures for control of erosion to protect water-dependent uses, where vegetative approaches to controlling erosion are not effective or where enhancement of natural protective features would not provide erosion protection
- Mitigation - requiring mitigation to ensure that there is no adverse impact from the installation of hard structures
- Sand management - managing inlets through sand bypassing
- Future mitigation - developing measures to mitigate damage from future storms
- Planning - planning for post-storm recovery and redevelopment
- Monitoring - establishing an Erosion Monitoring Program to quantify shoreline changes, erosion rates, and risk
- FEMA - participating in the Community Rating System of the National Flood Insurance Program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency

### ***Preserving and improving water quality***

Water quality is the basis for much of the value of both the economic activity and the natural resources of the State's coastal areas and inland waterfronts. New York State has abundant water resources. While many water bodies are of high quality, others are degraded by pollution. Even where water quality is high, human activity can pose a threat to quality. Managing development to reduce sources of water pollution, both along our waterfronts and throughout the watersheds of coastal waters and inland waterways, is a critical task for communities which want to make the most of their waterfronts and enjoy the many activities that depend on good water quality.

Sources of water quality problems are generally characterized as either point sources or nonpoint sources. Point sources are the direct discharges of contaminants into waterways. Examples of point sources include sewage treatment plant, factory, and power plant discharge through outfall pipes. Well established regulatory and financing programs exist to address point sources of pollution. Nonpoint pollution is diffuse. Examples include runoff from roads, farms, and lawns as well as contaminants from septic systems reaching groundwater or surface waters. Nonpoint sources are the most significant cause of water quality problems in the State.



*Water quality education*



*Cayuga Lake*

In assessing water quality in your community, you should look at:

- The watersheds associated with your waterfront, including topography, hydrography, soils, precipitation, drainage patterns, land cover, land use, development trends, and habitats
- The water quality, quantity, and related infrastructure, such as outfalls and other conveyances



*Point source discharge*



*Highway drainage improvements*

- The sources and extent of pollution, and the various types of pollutants
- Uses and activities impaired by pollution
- Local nonpoint source pollution management programs and practices
- Existing institutional arrangements of local, State and federal agencies, and roles of regional planning boards and non-governmental groups in protecting water quality
- Existing land and water use laws, including zoning, site plan review, harbor management, erosion and sediment control, and wetlands and watercourse laws to see if they deal with water quality issues
- Key resources warranting special protection or restoration

It is useful to map these physical features and to document pollution sources and impairments through photographs.

An initial indication of water quality can be found by consulting the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) water quality classifications. These classifications are based on the potential best use of a waterbody and set attainment goals and discharge standards for point sources. The DEC also publishes a series of reports, the Waterbody Inventory and Priority Waterbodies List, that identify the waters of the State that either cannot be fully used as a

resource, or are degraded by pollutants ([www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/23846.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/23846.html)).

These reports indicate the impairments in each listed waterbody and the causes of these impairments. The general identification of causes of pollution in this report can provide you with the basis to more specifically identify the uses and activities that will be of concern to you in developing your plan. You should also consider local monitoring programs that establish a baseline against which you can measure change in the water quality in your waterbodies. This includes physical and chemical parameters such as pH, dissolved oxygen, dissolved solids, sediments, nutrients, odor, color, and turbidity; health factors such as pathogens, chemical contaminants, and toxics; and aesthetic factors such as oils, refuse, and suspended solids.

There are four main types of uses and activities that you should examine for their effects on water quality:

- **Roads** contain and attract contaminants and convey these contaminants into waterbodies. The New York State Department of Transportation follows the techniques and procedures in its Environmental Procedures Manual ([www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/engineering/environmental-analysis/manuals-and-guidance/epm](http://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/engineering/environmental-analysis/manuals-and-guidance/epm)) in environmental matters relating to the planning, design, construction and maintenance of transportation facilities. These approaches may help you manage local roads.



- **Agriculture** is an important activity in most watersheds of the State. It is also a source of water pollution from pesticides, fertilizers, sediment, and animal waste. To address these myriad potential sources of pollution, the Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Program. ([www.agmkt.state.ny.us/SoilWater/aem](http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/SoilWater/aem)) provides a mechanism to help assess farming operations, identify potential environmental problems, and assess options to reduce pollution.
- **Marinas and Boating** can directly pollute waterways from activities such as refueling and hull maintenance. Similarly, direct discharges from boats can pollute waterways.
- **Development** - both existing and new - can be major sources of water quality problems. Examples include the expansion of impervious surfaces resulting in the erosion and sedimentation of streams and loss of base flow to wetlands and waterbodies, and contamination of ground and surface water from over-fertilization of lawns and failing septic systems.

The U.S. EPA provides more details on these and other pollution causes ([www.epa.gov/owow/nps](http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps)) and offers guidance for specifying management measures to address these causes in coastal waters ([www.epa.gov/owow/nps/MMGI](http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/MMGI)).

Water quality is affected by the combined effects of many individual actions from a variety of land

uses and activities within a watershed. As a result, water quality can be degraded even if there is no single, large pollution source in the watershed. While communities can and should address their water quality problems individually, many water quality problems are best addressed on a watershed basis, especially where watersheds cover more than one community. Watershed plans have been prepared in many of the watersheds throughout the State. The Division of Coastal Resources can tell you if one has been prepared for your community, and assist you in obtaining information.

The watershed planning and protection approach recognizes the need to address not only the individual water resources within any given watershed, but all the land from which the water drains to these waterbodies. This approach is comprehensive and action-oriented and places emphasis on broad environmental objectives that cover all aspects of water quality.

The primary questions to ask as you address water quality issues are:

- What are the current water quality conditions - are they improving or getting worse?
- Where are the water quality problem areas?
- What are the pollutant loadings in the various subwatersheds?
- What are the impairments and the causes of these impairments?



*Frankfort*



*Watershed improvements, Glen Cove Creek*



## Case Study: Lake George

Over the past several decades, land development within Lake George's 300-square-mile watershed has accelerated greatly, threatening community character, natural resources and water quality. As a result, planning for the future of Lake George has become increasingly important and, in particular, protecting lake water quality has become more and more of a priority.

Since the mid-1990s, substantial financial resources have been committed to protecting the lake and improving water quality. A wide variety of projects have been completed, including improvements along stream corridors to reduce run-off entering the lake and outreach programs. Although these projects progressed well, local government leaders recognized the need to establish a consensus on priority actions to protect and improve the lake.

With funding through the Environmental Protection Fund Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, a regional planning effort to protect Lake George began. Preparation of the plan was overseen by a committee comprised of representatives of the nine municipalities and three counties around the lake; Soil and Water Conservation Districts; the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service; State agencies; and other stakeholder organizations, including the Lake George Association, Fund for Lake George, Darrin

Fresh Water Institute, Lake George Basin Land Conservancy, and Cornell Cooperative Extension.

"Lake George - Planning for the Future" ([www.lakegeorge2000.org/Lake%20George-Plan%20for%20the%20Future.pdf](http://www.lakegeorge2000.org/Lake%20George-Plan%20for%20the%20Future.pdf)), a long-term strategy for protecting and improving the water quality and natural resources of Lake George, was completed in 2001. This plan built on previous planning efforts, particularly the 1987 "Plan for the Future of the Lake George Park," and set out the next generation of actions that will be needed to protect and improve Lake George.

This long-term water quality strategy will assure that local governments, State agencies, and other organizations work together to maximize the effectiveness of limited financial resources. Such a strategy will also improve the ability of local governments to access various funding sources for project implementation.

With completion of "Lake George - Planning for the Future," the committee that oversaw its completion has committed to continuing this collaborative effort by signing a Memorandum of Agreement creating the Lake George Watershed Coalition to focus on implementation ([www.lakegeorge2000.org](http://www.lakegeorge2000.org)).



- Where are the discharges, including stormwater outfalls and other conveyances, within the watershed that introduce pollution to your waterfront?
- What impacts will any changes in land and water uses or land use have on water quality, and where will these occur?
- Where are the gaps in the existing point and nonpoint source controls, and how can these be addressed?
- What changes to local land and water use controls such as subdivision and site plan review can be made to protect and improve water quality?
- What changes in routine roadway, drainage-way and stream maintenance practices can be made to protect and improve water quality?
- Where would focused nonpoint source pollution management most likely maintain or improve existing water quality?

Both watershed planning and protection approaches, and efforts targeting specific pollution sources, can help reverse water pollution. The following are some of the techniques you will want to consider to protect and improve water quality in your community:

- Design control - controlling the location and design of development to avoid water quality impairments

- Overlay district - adopting an overlay district to regulate the most immediate contributing areas surrounding waterbodies, including measures to control runoff
- Impact reduction - improving septic systems, providing vegetative buffers, and reducing use of fertilizers and pesticides in affected areas
- Best management - implementing best management practices, such as:
  - *creating wetlands for stormwater control*
  - *establishing vegetative treatment systems including buffers and grassy swales*
  - *developing a highway stormwater abatement program*
  - *minimizing the disturbance of natural vegetation and land contours during construction work*
- Open space protection - protecting open space parcels that currently provide water quality benefits
- Open space restoration - improving or restoring open space parcels to provide water quality benefits
- Pump-out stations - requiring vessel waste pumpouts at marinas
- No-discharge zones - requesting State designation of waterbodies as no-discharge zones

- Wastewater treatment - improving wastewater treatment facilities
- Septic System Standards - developing standards for septic systems, including routine inspections
- Changing outfalls - reducing or eliminating combined sewer outfalls
- Training - establishing training on appropriate road maintenance practices
- Education - providing public education and outreach programs for specific groups such as property owners or farmers
- Modeling - developing tools such as pollution potential models and GIS-based models to help in determining priorities for water quality improvements
- Monitoring - establishing a water quality monitoring program
- Coordination - implementing changes in institutional arrangements to coordinate implementation of water quality improvements
- Local controls - revising local land and water use controls to protect and restore water quality
- Permit compliance - implementing specific actions to achieve compliance with Phase II Stormwater Permits, as applicable

---

### ***Protecting and restoring habitats***

New York's coasts and waterways have a great variety of fish and wildlife habitats that are critical to the health of broader ecosystems upon which we all depend. These habitats include salt and freshwater marshes, swamps, mud and sand flats, beaches, rocky shores, riverine wetlands and riparian corridors, stream, bay and harbor bottoms, submerged aquatic vegetation beds, dunes, grasslands, and woodlands. Each provides support for critical life stages of fish and wildlife, including breeding, nursery, feeding, migration, and wintering. Maintaining ample, high-quality habitat along the State's coasts and waterways is key to having abundant and diverse fish and wildlife resources.

As development pressure mounts, many habitats are degraded or lost. Preserving our valuable fish and wildlife resources is not only an essential element of environmental quality but also has important recreational, economic, and community benefits. Recreational or commercial fishing is a major economic activity in many waterfront communities. Hunting and wildlife observation along the shore provide enjoyment for many residents and visitors.

A habitat can be broadly defined as a geographic area inhabited or otherwise used by a particular species or collection of species. Animals may spend all or parts of their lives in a habitat; a particular species can be dependent on several different kinds of habitats. For example, a bird may feed in one habitat, but nest and raise young in a different habitat. The

Atlantic striped bass lives much of its adult life offshore in the open water habitat of the Atlantic Ocean, but breeds in the Hudson River.

Throughout the State's coastal area, 250 Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats (SCFWH) have been designated by the Division of Coastal Resources. Under the SCFWH program, a site is considered significant if it serves one or more of the following functions:

- Is essential to the survival of a large portion of a particular fish or wildlife population
- Supports populations of species which are endangered, threatened, or of special concern



*Ospreys nesting, Orient*

- Supports populations having significant commercial, recreational, or educational value
- Exemplifies a habitat type that is not commonly found in the State or in a coastal region

The significance of a habitat increases to the extent that it could not be replaced if destroyed.

For each designated habitat site, a habitat map and narrative are created. The narrative constitutes a record of the basis for the significant coastal fish and wildlife habitat's designation and provides specific information regarding the fish and wildlife resources that depend on this area. General information is also provided to assist in evaluating impacts of proposed activities on characteristics of the habitat which are essential to the habitat's values. This information is used in conjunction with the habitat impairment test found in the impact assessment section to determine whether the proposed activities are consistent with the significant habitats policy.

New York State agencies use the information provided for each designated habitat in the State and federal consistency review process. In addition, communities that prepare Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs are required to protect designated significant habitats and are encouraged to use local land use controls for habitat protection.



---

In identifying the important habitats along your waterfront, you are aided by several systematic inventories that have been undertaken by the State and federal government. You should consult the following to see if important habitats exist on your waterfront:

- Freshwater wetlands mapped by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- Tidal wetlands mapped by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats for coastal areas of the State
- Essential Fish Habitats identified by the National Marine Fisheries Service
- National Wetlands Inventory of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- New York Natural Heritage Program
- New York State Breeding Bird Atlas and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Breeding Bird Survey

In addition to these inventories many federal, State, county, and regional planning agencies have inventoried habitats and other important natural areas as part of various resource management plans, such as National Estuary Programs, watershed plans, and regional coastal management plans. Universities and nonprofit organizations such as The Nature Conservancy,

National Audubon Society of New York, land trusts, and the Open Space Institute may have also identified important habitats in your area.

There may also be areas along your shore that, while not identified in any of the above inventories, are nevertheless significant to the community. People who regularly use and are familiar with the waterfront will know where these special places are. Keep in mind that maintaining the natural character of the water's edge throughout your community can be particularly important for many species.



*Iona Marsh National Estuarine Research Reserve, Hudson River*



*Long Beach Bay, Orient*

When you have identified the upland and in-water areas that are important animal or plant habitat you will need to assemble the following information about them:

- What is their condition? Are they relatively pristine, significantly impaired, or threatened by pollution, development, or overuse?
- What are the significant species that use the habitat? How has the population changed over time?
- Is the habitat rare or common?
- What value does the community place on the habitat?
- What significant human uses are made of the habitat - fishing, hunting, wildlife observation, plant harvesting, educational programs?
- Is the habitat replaceable or irreplaceable?
- Is the habitat actively managed, by whom, for what purpose?
- What level of protection does the habitat have? Is it publicly owned or owned by a conservation organization? Is it protected by government regulation? Is there a community stewardship program?
- Who in the community is knowledgeable about the natural areas of your waterfront?

## Case Study: New York City

The Natural Resources Group (NRG) of New York City's Parks & Recreation Department is developing and implementing management programs to protect and restore the City's natural resources ([www.nycgovparks.org/sub\\_about/parks\\_divisions/nrg/nrg\\_home.html](http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_about/parks_divisions/nrg/nrg_home.html)). Three projects in the Borough of Queens are excellent models for communities wishing to undertake similar projects.

Encompassing more than 635-acres of woodlands, meadows, and fresh and saltwater marshes, the heavily used Alley Pond Park is crisscrossed by expressways. Yet it is the last major forested place in Queens and its creek systems are the only remaining habitat for certain frog and salamander species in New York City. With \$550,000 in funding from the City of New York and the New York State Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act, NRG staff and volunteers undertook restoration of a 46-acre wooded area frequently used for trash dumping and mountain biking. The area had become infested with invasive or non-native plant species, such as cat briar, tree of heaven, and ink berry. Habitat restoration occurred in one- and two-acre increments, with NRG staff and volunteers removing and treating many truckloads of vines and nuisance plant species.

In the nearby Alley Creek area, NRG restored approximately 30 acres of tidal wetlands. The work was completed in conjunction with

improvements being made at the Cross Island and Long Island Expressways, and was funded by related impact mitigation funds from the New York State Department of Transportation. NRG removed invasive plant species, such as *Phragmites australis* (also known as common reed), replanting the area with *Spartina alterniflora* and *Spartina patens*, which are native to salt marshes. All work was completed by NRG's salt marsh restoration team, with assistance from park volunteers. The restoration project was scientifically challenging because the replacement plant species are highly sensitive, requiring very specific planting elevations and growing medium to thrive. The Alley Creek tidal wetland is now a scenic salt marsh used as a nesting area by ospreys.

NRG also planned, designed, and implemented a difficult freshwater shrub swamp and kettle hole pond restoration in an upland area at the 500-acre Forest Park. The project involved removal of ballfields constructed at the bottom of a kettle pond on many tons of fill and garbage during the 1960s. Over time, the drainage system of the ballfields failed. Increased flooding caused by the site's natural hydrology made the ballfields unusable. With \$550,000 in funding from the City of New York and the New York State Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act, NRG restored the natural habitat of the ballfield area, adding three acres of freshwater wetland habitat and reforestation of four acres in the surrounding watershed. Interpretive trails and observation areas were

also developed to provide an educational and recreational resource for birders, butterfly, and dragonfly enthusiasts.

In all of these projects, and many others, NRG has secured grant funding from a wide range of sources, including the City of New York, New York State Departments of State, Transportation and Environmental Conservation, Natural Resource Damage Account, Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and other sources. They have also worked creatively and successfully with a wide variety of volunteer parks conservancy groups and volunteers.



---

Some of this information will be included in the State and federal inventories referenced above or can be obtained from staff of the respective agencies, educational institutions, or nonprofit organizations.

When you know where habitats are, how they are used by both the animals and by people, what their condition is, what their value is, what threatens them, and who is knowledgeable about them, you can then consider what you need to do to protect and enhance them. Among the activities you should consider are:

- Identifying areas that should be acquired by the public or a conservation organization.
- Land or water use regulations that protect natural areas by limiting the location of land or water uses; requiring buffer areas, particularly along waterways and wetlands; restricting the clearing of vegetation; controlling the siting of development to preserve wildlife corridors; managing the timing of development; and other similar requirements.
- Educational programs that acquaint people with the value and function of habitats in their community.
- Wetland regulations that complement and supplement the State and federal regulations. Cooperative management agreements with large land owners whose property contains valuable habitat.

- Elimination or reduction of the sources of pollution that threaten habitats.
- Projects to restore habitats, such as wetland restoration projects.
- Support for citizen groups to become involved in, or initiate, stewardship programs for a natural area.

Enhancing these natural resources should be based on principles of:

- Preserving diversity of native plant and animal species
- Protecting wetlands and significant habitats
- Restoring native plant and animal populations and biological productivity
- Safeguarding vulnerable species and rare or exemplary communities
- Managing potentially imperiled natural areas

As you examine your natural resources, you should look for opportunities to restore degraded habitats to pre-disturbance conditions. Restoration can reverse habitat degradation and loss, and reestablish valuable ecological functions. Restored habitats also support New York's economy and tourism industry by helping to sustain commercial and recreational fisheries and by providing places for outdoor recreation and enjoyment. Restoration activities are varied

and include many habitat types and restoration methodologies. For example:

- Salt marsh restoration through invasive plant species control, re-establishment of tidal flow, and surface elevation manipulation
- Freshwater wetland restoration through native species plantings, surface water and groundwater level control, and invasive plant species control
- Forested upland slope restoration through installation of bioengineered erosion control methods, native species plantings, and invasive plant species control

The Division of Coastal Resources and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation collaborated to develop guidelines for salt marsh restoration and monitoring to assist local governments, State agencies, and other institutions, organizations and community groups in implementing coastal restoration projects. The document assists in identifying potential salt marsh restoration projects and developing conceptual plans by characterizing the primary causes of salt marsh degradation and corresponding methods for their remediation. The guidelines also provide a standard monitoring protocol to increase data collection and improve project evaluation, helping to ensure the success of State-funded habitat restoration projects ([www.nyswaterfronts.com/waterfront\\_natural\\_resources.asp](http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/waterfront_natural_resources.asp)).





*Stirling Basin, Greenport*



*Constitution Marsh, Hudson Highlands*



*East Hampton, Atlantic Ocean*

Among other water quality and development issues, habitat loss and the identification of restoration opportunities have been a key part of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans prepared for the three National Estuaries in New York State: the Long Island Sound Study ([www.epa.gov/region01/eco/lis](http://www.epa.gov/region01/eco/lis)), the New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program ([www.harborestuary.org](http://www.harborestuary.org)), and the Peconic Estuary Program ([www.peconicestuary.org](http://www.peconicestuary.org)).

The Division of Coastal Resources assisted the South Shore Estuary Reserve Council with development of the Comprehensive Management Plan for the South Shore Estuary Reserve ([www.nyswaterfronts.com/initiatives\\_southshore.asp](http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/initiatives_southshore.asp)). The plan provides a blueprint for the long-term health of the Reserve's bays and tributaries, its tidal wetlands and wildlife, and its tourism and economy.

These management plans can help you identify opportunities for habitat restoration in your own community.

### **The Public Waterfront**

People want to walk along the water's edge, whether it's a busy city promenade, a deserted sandy beach, or a shady stream bank. They want to use the water to swim, to fish, to boat, to dive. However, this desire for access is not always easily fulfilled. Waterfront development, dispersed access points, residency requirements, and limited capacity at recreational facilities can thwart the public's desire to use and enjoy the waterfront. Even the public's right,

under the Public Trust Doctrine, to use publicly owned lands and waters can be hindered by structures in the water and along the shore.

In making the most of your waterfront, you will likely find that access to coastal and inland waterways should be improved and increased. Creative partnerships among public and private entities can assist in these efforts. Objectives might include connecting individual public open spaces through a system of greenways and blueways, protecting and maintaining existing public access areas, and developing areas for new public access.

The public lands and waters of the State are a significant recreation resource that are an essential part of the character of many shoreline communities. Recreational facilities should reflect a wide variety of active and passive activities, while preserving other important assets, such as natural resources and maritime heritage. The needs of an aging population and expanded opportunities for disabled users should be highlighted. Recreational opportunities can be improved by identifying areas with additional recreational potential, working with new partners, and recognizing and seizing small and non-traditional opportunities to expand access.

Collecting information and asking questions from the public use perspective will help to formulate approaches that enhance your waterfront and revitalize your community. Maximizing public access to the water, while maintaining other important uses, requires consideration of a wide

range of approaches by a community. In determining how to make your waterfront more accessible, start by asking several key questions.

- What is the nature of existing access to your waterfront? What types of access, beaches, trails, boat launches, parks, marinas, or nature preserves exist?
- How extensively are they used? Are they well used, little used, over used?
- Who owns and manages them: State or federal government, local government, private business, a private association, or a conservation organization?
- What is their condition? Are they well maintained, neglected, or in disrepair?
- Are there adequate support facilities for recreation areas? Is there enough parking? Can boaters and fishermen obtain supplies?
- Are there private encroachments on public areas, particularly rights-of-way, public trust lands and waters, or public easements?
- What views of the waterfront are valued by the community and visitors?
- What are the costs associated with the use of the facilities? Are there restrictions on who may use them?

- What studies and plans already exist that address public access and recreation on your waterfront?

It is useful to map the public access and waterfront recreation sites that have been identified.

When you know what you have, ask yourself “How can we improve what we have and what more do we want or need?” You will need information about:

- The nature of the demand for more access and recreation on your waterfront by type of access, and who in the community wants/needs the access or recreational opportunities: neighborhoods; specific recreational interests such as competitive rowing, fishing, or scuba diving; the community at large; the region; or tourists and visitors
- The sites that have potential for providing access and recreation and the conditions that make the site appropriate or inhibit its use
- The environmental constraints on increasing access and recreation at a particular site
- The capacity of necessary infrastructure to support new or improved access and recreation



*Tonawanda, Niagara River*



*Ditch Plains, Montauk*

## Case Study: The Public Trust Doctrine

The Public Trust Doctrine provides that public trust lands, waters, and living resources in a State are held in trust for the benefit of all of the people, and establishes the right of the public to fully enjoy public trust lands, waters, and living resources for a wide variety of public uses.

In New York State, the public trust waters are the waters of the State, and the public trust lands are the lands now, or formerly, beneath those waters to the high water mark. The living resources inhabiting or dependent on these lands and waters are also subject to the Public Trust Doctrine. On Long Island, as a result of colonial era grants, some of these public trust lands are held by the towns.

The Public Trust Doctrine is particularly important in establishing the public's right to use and pass over the foreshore of tidal waters. Rivers whose bed and banks are in private ownership may also provide opportunities for public use, including incidental portage on riparian lands, if they are navigable-in-fact. A number of landmark cases have confirmed and described the public's rights and the State's responsibilities with regard to public trust lands and waters. In 1992, the New York State Legislature amended the Public Lands Law codifying, in part, the Public Trust Doctrine ([www.nyswaterfronts.com/waterfront\\_public\\_trust.asp](http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/waterfront_public_trust.asp)). The legislature found that regulation of projects and

structures, proposed to be constructed in or over public trust lands and waters, was necessary to responsibly manage the public's interests in trust lands. The legislature stated that use of trust lands is to be consistent with the public interest in reasonable use and responsible management of waterways for the purposes of navigation, commerce, fishing, bathing, recreation, environmental and aesthetic protection, and access to the navigable waters and lands underwater of the State.

Riparian and littoral property owners have a right to use or cross public trust lands and waters to gain access to navigable waters. However, the method and manner by which they gain access is determined and limited by the effects on the public's rights, local conditions and custom, and applicable State and local regulations.

Understanding both what the Public Trust Doctrine says about the rights of the public and the rights of riparian or littoral property owners in general and what the specific history of how public trust lands have been managed along a community's shoreline is critical in managing the waterfront.

In the 19th and 20th centuries many grants of public trust lands were made to private interests to promote the commerce of the State and for other purposes. These grants were particularly prevalent in the cities and villages of the State where development was concentrated. In many

instances the underwater lands conveyed were subsequently filled. As a result, a community's current shoreline is often not its original natural shoreline. Since these filled lands were imbued with the public trust and the conveyances were usually less than a fee interest or had conditions attached, certain public rights in these lands may continue to exist. This situation can be particularly useful in obtaining public access and other public benefits as the waterfront is redeveloped for new uses. Also, the State may revoke grants when the uses proposed are not in conformity with the Public Trust Doctrine.

The New York State Office of General Services is generally the current custodian of public trust lands. They have records of all conveyances and the original shoreline, which may be of use to communities working on plans or projects to make the most of their waterfront.



*Fishkill Creek, Beacon*



- Property ownership, including the ownership of underwater lands and particularly lands that were once underwater and have been filled

This and similar information will enable you to identify the opportunities that exist for increasing access and recreation. In assessing how realistic these opportunities are you will need to be aware of the many approaches that are available to bring about the changes desired. While one of the most obvious means of improving public access and recreational opportunities is through capital spending by federal, State, or local government - either directly or through grant programs - there are other available approaches that should be considered.

- **Local land use regulations** - new waterfront development can be required, under certain circumstances, to provide public access or recreational facilities as part of the development; site plan regulations can have standards that require buildings to be sited to protect views to or from the water; land can be zoned for recreational use only.
- **Partnerships** - partnerships between waterfront businesses and local government can be established with business improvement districts that create public waterfront amenities to enhance business and public access.
- **Nonprofit organizations** - nonprofit organizations, particularly land trusts and environmental organizations, can work with communities to improve public access.

- **Underwater rights** - any remaining State interest in former underwater lands can be used to provide public access as part of new development.

- **Institutional access** - large institutional facilities, whether public or private, such as hospitals or schools, located along the shore can provide public access and recreation on their grounds.

### **The Working Waterfront**

The State's working waterfronts include a wide variety of ports and harbors which have many water-dependent uses. Many uses and businesses require a location on the water to function, or to harvest living or mineral resources from coastal and inland waters. Agricultural uses, especially orchards and vineyards, are clustered along the waterfront because of the beneficial effects of the waterbody on climate. Active, economically viable waterfronts have important cultural, historic, and scenic attributes; and maritime uses are part of our heritage and can provide the context for an exciting, vibrant tourism industry.

### ***Water-dependent and water-enhanced uses***

A water-dependent use is defined as "an activity which can only be conducted on, in, over, or adjacent to a water body because such activity requires direct access to that water body, and which involves, as an integral part of such activity, the use of the water." The ports and harbors of New York State are where most of these uses are concentrated. These water-dependent uses and businesses include international shipping facilities, marinas, mooring

areas, yacht clubs, boat yards, commercial and recreational fishing operations, facilities for shipping petroleum products and aggregates, ferry landings, and various support facilities for waterborne commerce and recreation. Together, these uses generate billions of dollars for the State's economy and are vital to the economic health and character of most waterfront communities. These working waterfronts need to be protected and promoted as important elements of a community's maritime heritage and economy. However, because the waterfront is also an attractive place to live, there is competition for the limited land area that surrounds ports and harbors that can endanger these important uses. Competition can also exist between the uses we make of harbors and the natural resources they contain.

Communities face hard decisions about how to allocate the limited harbor shoreline and waters among competing uses. These decisions require complex judgements about:

- How best to promote water-dependent development without compromising environmental quality?
- What is the right mix of waterfront uses for a particular community?
- How to balance property owners' expectations with the community's interest in maintaining a sense of maritime heritage?

## Case Study: Lake George Village

Working in partnership with private landowners and New York State, the Village of Lake George has improved public access along the lakefront. Constructed in direct response to key revitalization needs identified during the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program planning process, these projects have strengthened linkages between the waterfront and downtown, and created a new “front door” for businesses located on the lake.

Between 1995 and 1999, the Village received nearly \$300,000 in State grants to complete a variety of waterfront improvement projects. These included construction of a 650 foot long pedestrian walkway on the Lake George waterfront, streetscape improvements along three village streets connecting the waterfront to commercial areas, and conversion of these streets from vehicular access to pedestrian access to provide safer pedestrian access to waterfront amenities. The Village was assisted by a landscape architecture consultant, who prepared all conceptual designs and construction documents, and helped coordinate project completion.

Part of the Village's success resulted from involving the private sector. The Village negotiated easements from five waterfront property owners, only once using its powers of eminent domain. The Village also worked with property owners to establish a special assessment district, enabling them to raise money for ongoing improvements and maintenance through special tax assessments.



- What infrastructure and support facilities do water-dependent uses need to remain viable?
- How to meet the needs of tourists, seasonal, and year-round residents?
- What priority should water-dependent uses be given in land use regulation?

In order to answer these questions, you should identify your community's existing water-dependent uses by type, size, and location. You should discuss with the owners or operators of these uses the problems they face in maintaining a viable operation. You might then identify the areas suitable for particular water-dependent uses.

You will find that infrastructure needs for the working waterfront vary widely. Whether these needs are a public or private responsibility, opportunities to coordinate maintenance activities or to provide necessary infrastructure, such as channel dredging, public docks and ferry landings, or links to land transportation, can often be most efficiently met in the ports and harbors where water-dependent uses are concentrated.

Communities should examine the pattern and trends of land use change along their waterfront to determine an effective strategy for retaining or attracting water-dependent uses. You should ask the following questions:

- Are the water-dependent uses being replaced by uses which do not require a waterfront location, such as residential uses?

- Is demand for recreational boating facilities increasing?
- Are water-dependent industries closing without a new water-dependent use moving in?
- Why are these changes occurring?
- What is the nature of demand for the uses on the waterfront?

While there must be market support to sustain most water-dependent uses, the market alone cannot be relied upon to assure that the range of uses a community desires will be maintained or attained. Various incentives and disincentives, as well as land and water use regulations, are tools a community can use to promote its working waterfront. Choosing the right mix from among the tools available will depend upon the types of uses desired and the degree and nature of the competition for space on the waterfront.

The most basic approach to assuring that water-dependent uses have priority on the waterfront is through zoning. Once a community has established a list of permitted uses consistent with the uses it desires and has identified the areas where these uses are appropriate, the most important factor in selecting the best technique is the degree of competition for use of the waterfront. The specific zoning techniques employed can vary depending on the degree of competition. The following general approaches to zoning for water-dependent uses reflect the role of competition:



*New York Harbor*



*Salmon cleaning station, Lake Ontario*





*Stirling Basin, Greenport*



*Essex, Lake Champlain*

- Permit water-dependent uses along with other uses. This is appropriate where competition is low, much open land is available, or there is a low demand for water-dependent uses.
- Permit water-dependent use and allow other uses but not those that are most likely to choose a waterfront location and thus would compete with water-dependent uses, such as residential uses.
- Permit water-dependent uses and allow other uses only by special permit with the condition that they be part of a mixed-use proposal that includes water-dependent uses. This may provide needed economic support for the desired water-dependent uses.
- Permit water-dependent use only. This approach is particularly appropriate where the waterfront area is developed with water-dependent uses and there is strong development pressure to convert to other uses, generally residential.
- Provide for more than one water-dependent use zone with a different set of uses in each. This is appropriate where there may be competition for space between water-dependent uses, e.g., marinas and commercial fishing, or the uses have different siting needs.

Other tools that communities can use to attract or maintain the mix of uses that will make the most

of their harbors include use value assessment for water-dependent uses; public infrastructure improvements, either directly or through creation of a harbor improvement district; working with State and federal regulators to expedite the permit process for water-dependent uses through perimeter permits for marinas, generic environmental impact statements for common actions of similar harbor uses, or coordination of dredging projects; and harbor management plans.

A water-enhanced use is defined “as an activity which does not require a location adjacent to coastal waters, but whose location on the waterfront adds to the public use and enjoyment of the water’s edge.” Water-enhanced uses are primarily recreational, cultural, retail, or entertainment uses. These uses are also important to the economy, character, and public enjoyment of a community’s waterfront. When developed in association with water-dependent uses they can provide necessary economic support; however, they may also compete with water-dependent uses. A community needs to decide the mix of uses that is suitable for its waterfront.

### ***Harbor management planning***

Changes in the State’s recreational boating fleet, changes in the use of harbor shorelines, dredging needs, competition for space, and shifts in global markets affect the efficient operation of our ports and harbors. Conflicts have increased between passive and active recreation; between commercial and recreational uses; and, between all uses and the natural resources of a harbor.

Harbor management plans can be used to analyze and resolve these conflicts and to coordinate jurisdictional and regulatory authorities. They are key to making the most of the waterside of your waterfront. The Division of Coastal Resources can provide technical and financial assistance to communities to prepare harbor management plans, as components of Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs, to improve management of harbor uses and activities. Guidelines on the preparation of a harbor management plan are available from the Division of Coastal Resources ([www.nyswaterfronts.com/waterfront\\_working\\_harbormgmt.asp](http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/waterfront_working_harbormgmt.asp)).

While the State and federal governments have the authority to regulate many in-water activities, these regulations are generally for specific activities or for discrete purposes. Harbor management planning enables local government to address a wide range of uses and activities in harbor and nearshore areas to improve harbor safety and operation.

To develop a plan for the waterside of your waterfront that will complement your plans for the landside, you will need to understand how your harbor or nearshore areas are being used now and what constraints exist for new uses. The information you will need includes the following:

- details on commercial, industrial, and recreational water-dependent uses such as marinas, boat yards, transshipment facilities, swimming areas, commercial or recreational fishing or shellfishing, types

of commercial and recreational vessel traffic, and vessel anchorage or mooring areas

- water quality classifications and use standards
- wetlands and significant habitats
- the general pattern of public and private ownership of underwater lands
- historic underwater sites or structures, such as shipwrecks or archeological sites
- location of underwater cables or pipelines
- existing infrastructure, such as navigation channels and basins, bulkheads, docks and docking facilities, sewage treatment and vessel waste facilities, public water supplies, and roadways supporting the harbor area
- a description of adjacent existing land uses and zoning
- the existing federal, State and local regulations that apply in the harbor

Once you have this basic information you will want to determine the issues and conflicts that are affecting your ability to make the most of your waterfront. The following lists typical issues and conflicts that should be considered and analyzed if they are present in your harbor or nearshore areas:



Tonawanda

- Interferences with existing navigation channels by structures, such as docks, floats or anchored or moored vessels
- Public health and safety issues, such as conflicts between shellfishing and vessel anchorage or mooring areas, the operation of vessels in or near swimming areas, unsafe vessel speeds, and general boating congestion
- Substandard water quality and a need to improve water quality for a range of desired uses, such as fishing, swimming, or year-round or seasonal shellfishing
- Degraded or threatened natural areas, such as wetlands or significant coastal fish and wildlife habitats
- A need to maintain or provide harbor infrastructure, such as roadways, navigation channels, bulkheads, boat ramps, docks, sewage treatment, and vessel waste pumpout facilities
- Limits on public access to or use of the harbor area
- A high demand for, but a lack of, appropriate commercial vessel support facilities or sufficiently maintained navigation channel or basin depths
- Problems related to dredging and dredged material disposal
- The need to protect important water-dependent uses in appropriate areas within harbors

- Zoning of water-dependent uses for other uses in areas appropriate for water-dependent uses
- Intertidal wetland areas, bays, or other offshore or intertidal areas that are used or zoned for residential or other inappropriate uses



*Oswego*

Based on your analysis of harbor conditions, planning for your harbor should lead to the preparation of a harbor management chart (a water area map) that indicates how the harbor will function and how specific areas of the harbor will be used. This is similar to a zoning map, and needs to be supported by a local law. The chart should show:

- existing or proposed navigation channels, fairways, or accessways over the water's surface
- open water areas

- mooring or anchorage areas
- marinas
- periodic or on-going special use zones, such as areas for water skiing, races or other special events
- buffer areas between water surface uses
- swimming areas
- harbor or pierhead lines and bulkhead lines
- perimeter permit areas
- major structures, such as groins, jetties, seawalls, bulkheads, and piers
- sensitive habitat or shellfishing areas
- upland adjacent to the waterbody designated for water-dependent uses
- proposed public improvements, such as docks, vessel waste disposal facilities, launch ramps

The harbor management law should also address regulation of the following:

- the use, operation, speed, anchoring and mooring, and other uses of or activities associated with vessels
- the siting and construction of docks, piers, bulkheads, or other in-water structures



- activities allowed or prohibited in sensitive areas, such as highly productive wetlands and significant habitats, or in locations where public safety is of concern, such as swimming areas
- dredging and dredged material disposal, mining, or excavating of subsurface material
- swimming, SCUBA diving or other primary contact in-water recreational activities

Other means of implementing harbor management that you should consider include:

- Harbor Improvement Districts - establishing harbor improvement districts pursuant to Section 190 of the Town Law to provide a funding mechanism for public projects and physical improvements in and adjacent to the harbor area, such as construction and maintenance of public launching ramps, docks, vessel waste pumpout and waste reception facilities, land acquisition, and dredging
- Capital projects - identifying commercial or recreational fishing docks, channel dredging, shoreline stabilization, and acquisition of boats and other equipment
- Management/Enforcement - appointing a harbor manager or designating someone to administer and enforce the plan, providing a harbormaster or other person

with the training and authority to administer the plan, or assigning the harbor responsibilities to existing officials and boards

- Education - providing information to recreational boaters and other users of the harbor area about harbor safety and public health, maritime history, uses of the harbor, and natural resources to increase public awareness of harbor issues

Actions by federal and State agencies are often necessary in order to fully implement and advance projects in harbors. These actions may include approving anchorage and mooring areas, designating vessel waste no-discharge zones, dredging or maintaining major navigation channels and basins, constructing or maintaining breakwaters, funding certain studies, or providing technical assistance. These actions should be described in the harbor management plan.

### ***Agriculture***

In New York State, agriculture often comprises a significant land use in waterfront communities. Agriculture is important for its economic value, its positive contribution to the character of the landscape, as an open space resource, and often for its role in the history and development of the community. While a small percentage of all agricultural land in the State, agricultural land in the coastal area and along inland waterbodies is often among the most valuable and productive. These areas include much of the State's orchards and vineyards which benefit from the moderating climatic effects of the water bodies.

Dairy farms, the largest segment of agriculture in the State, as well as many other types of agriculture, can also be found along major waterbodies.

Agriculture faces many threats. Agricultural land goes out of production as a result of regulated and unregulated market forces and as result of competition from other land uses, especially residential development. This latter threat is particularly strong in waterfront communities because of the high demand for homes near the water. While communities cannot directly affect market forces, they can affect the loss of agricultural land to other uses.

Agriculture can also be a source of environmental problems, including increased nutrient loading, pesticide contamination, and nuisance odors. However, when properly managed, maintaining land in agriculture can be an excellent way to preserve community character and heritage, provide economic benefit, conserve open space, increase scenic amenities, and protect the environment.

In order to maintain farmland, a community needs to first understand the nature of the agriculture that exists. You will need to know:

- What is grown and where is it grown?
- What are the market forces affecting the profitability of farming in your community? While you may not be able to affect these, you need to understand the economic environment in which farmers are operating.



*Southold vineyards*



*Southold*

- What farm support services exist? Is there sufficient farming in the surrounding area to support the suppliers and distributors necessary for efficient farm operation?
- How strong is the demand for other uses of farmland?
- What are the existing land use regulations of the farmland, what restraints do they place on normal farm operations, and what other land uses do they permit?
- What development restrictions on the farmland exist, for example, is it in an Agricultural District, or have development rights been purchased?
- What are the soil types and which soils have been identified as particularly important for agricultural production?
- What is the history of farming in the community; have farms been in the same family for centuries?
- Are there abandoned farms or old fields that also contribute to the character of the landscape?

Soil surveys exist for each county and are developed by the Natural Resource Conservation Service ([www.soils.usda.gov](http://www.soils.usda.gov)) and they can be reviewed in County Soil Conservation District Offices, libraries, and other public offices. Your County Cooperative Extension office can provide information about the extent, type, and

economics of local agriculture. In developing your plan to support the continuation of agriculture in your community, you should involve all those with an interest in the matter. This would include, in addition to the farmers, organizations such as the Cooperative Extension, New York Farm Bureau, the regional and county farm bureaus ([www.nyfb.org](http://www.nyfb.org)), and the American Farmland Trust ([www.farmland.org](http://www.farmland.org)); State and federal agricultural agencies; local and county government agencies; land trusts and conservation organizations; environmental and community organizations; and other community leaders and decision makers.

The means that you select to maintain farming in your community will depend upon the type of farming, the nature of the competition for farmland, and the external forces affecting trends in the products of the farms. In consultation with all stakeholders, you should select the combination of approaches that best fit the circumstances of your community. Among the options that can be considered are the following:

- Agricultural districts - encourage participation in the State Agricultural District Program, or in individual participation in agricultural value assessment programs
- Zoning - enact zoning regulations that at a minimum allow for farming, and where necessary, prohibit other uses or establish large lot sizes that reflect the agricultural activity, e.g., 40 acres, to reduce the market for competing uses

- 
- Development rights - establish or encourage participation in purchase-of-development rights programs
  - Transfer-of-development rights - provide in your zoning for the transfer-of-development rights
  - Eliminate unnecessary restrictions - review your land use regulations and eliminate standards for farms that unnecessarily restrict normal farming practices, for example, aesthetic standards in site plan review for new farm buildings
  - Clustering - require the clustering of development to preserve the best farmland where other uses are allowed on farmland
  - Buffer requirements - require new non-farm uses to provide a buffer between the new use and any farming activity
  - Runoff reduction - encourage implementation of comprehensive measures to reduce polluted farm runoff
  - Public education - develop an outreach program to increase public understanding of the value of local agriculture and how agriculture and community growth can co-exist
  - Historic preservation - preserve historic barns and farm houses



*Papscanee Island, East Greenbush*



*Coxsackie*



## Case Study: Town of Essex

Communities on Lake Champlain are realizing their visions to make the most of their waterfronts. They started by sharing their vision of the future in a regional waterfront revitalization program. Many of these communities are building on this initiative by implementing their own local programs.

In the Town of Essex ([www.essexnewyork.com](http://www.essexnewyork.com)) seasonal pressures are building. Increased ferry traffic, tourism, and growing second home ownership are affecting the quality of life in this historic hamlet. Use conflicts on the lake are occurring more frequently as water-based recreation grows in popularity. In response, the Town is using its Local Waterfront Revitalization Program to protect its small town character - balancing historic preservation and development throughout the Town and making the most of its attractive lakefront location.

The Local Waterfront Revitalization Program protects community character and the environmental quality of Lake Champlain, promotes the expansion of public access along the shoreline, and raises public awareness regarding the Town's cultural and natural resources. The Program is implemented by a new zoning law and a harbor management law which provide clear standards to protect the historic character of the Town, to regulate erosion control and shoreline stabilization measures, and to provide local control over

moorings and docks. A site plan review process was put in place for all development activities within a Shoreline Protection Overlay District.

With no planning staff and limited funding, the task of completing the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program fell to an enthusiastic and dedicated group of local residents, with technical assistance from Essex County and the Division of Coastal Resources. The Zoning and Shoreline Review Committee, with representatives from the Town Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board and the Essex County Planner, met weekly for more than three years. All meetings were open to and enthusiastically attended by the public, including the Essex Community Heritage Organization, marina operators, and permanent and seasonal residents. This public involvement and support contributed to participation, commitment, and approval by the Town Board.

These volunteers have made a real difference to the community. By completing its Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, the Town is well positioned to achieve its vision of protecting its small town historic character.



# CHAPTER FIVE:

## DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

---

In this chapter, you'll work through the following step:

- **Refining your vision and developing a strategy**

By now you have developed a vision to enhance your waterfront; built a base of support in the community; and established partnerships to develop a waterfront revitalization plan. You have analyzed your waterfront from four key perspectives - the developed waterfront, natural waterfront, public waterfront, and working waterfront - and have collected substantial information about your waterfront's assets, constraints, and opportunities. Use the information you gathered to give your vision a "reality check." What have you learned about how you can fulfill your vision?

- What are the obstacles to your vision?
- Have you discovered even more exciting opportunities than you thought existed?
- Are your ideas still sound?

### Refining your vision and developing a strategy

Until now your vision has been based upon your initial understanding of your waterfront and its role in the community. Now that you have taken a closer look around and understand how to make the most of your assets, you can re-evaluate and refine your vision.

When you have refined your vision, it is time to create a plan and strategy to help you move from vision to implementation. A waterfront plan and strategy has ten characteristics:

- **Realistic** - It should indicate what is possible given available or potential resources.
- **Comprehensive** - It should address fully the range of conditions that affect the quality of life along a waterfront including human, economic, social, and environmental conditions.
- **Specific** - It should target and address the distinct needs of different parts of the waterfront.
- **Coordinated** - It should be integrated with the community's annual operating budget, as well as the capital improvements program or budget.
- **Partnership-based** - It should bring public and private interests together in a combined effort to address issues and opportunities.
- **Citizen-focused** - It should enjoy broad community awareness and support.
- **Understandable** - It should be easy to read and understand.
- **Solution-specific** - It should identify community issues and directly propose solutions which will remedy or address these issues.

- **Change-oriented** - It should offer specific strategies to alleviate identified community problems and shortcomings.
- **Contemporary** - It should be updated when necessary to reflect changing conditions, as well as changing community perceptions.

### *The role of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program*

The Local Waterfront Revitalization Program provides a means to turn your vision, enhanced by the information you have gathered, the analysis you have done, and the partnerships you have formed, into a plan and strategy that can be readily implemented. At the beginning of this guidebook we indicated that a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program is both a plan and a program. At this stage you will focus on the plan.

As a plan, a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, or "LWRP" as it is commonly known, is a locally prepared land and water use plan and strategy for a community's waterfront. It provides a comprehensive framework within which a community's vision for its waterfront can be formalized.

A LWRP may be comprehensive and address all issues that affect a community's entire waterfront. Alternatively, it may be issue driven, addressing only the most critical waterfront issue(s) facing a community, such as public



*Skaneateles Lake*



*Battery Park, New York City*

access or water quality, or it may focus on a specific area, such as the downtown, a harbor, or a critical natural resource area. Communities with shared interests or resources are encouraged to coordinate their individual programs or to prepare a common program. The Division of Coastal Resources can help you to determine the right approach for your community.

### **Putting it together - preparing an LWRP**

Working in partnership with the Division of Coastal Resources, a community will complete the five sections of a LWRP: the waterfront revitalization area boundary; an inventory and analysis of existing conditions; waterfront policies; proposed land and water uses and projects; and implementation techniques. Once approved by the New York State Secretary of State, the LWRP serves to coordinate State and federal actions needed to assist the community to achieve its vision.

### **Section I: Defining the waterfront revitalization area boundaries**

This section includes a map and provides a narrative description of the LWRP's land and waterside boundaries.

In developing a LWRP, one of the earliest tasks that communities complete is the delineation of the waterfront revitalization area boundaries. You will already have established a geographic boundary for the community's waterfront study as a way to focus planning efforts. Using this as

a guide, refine your boundary based on the information that you discovered so that the boundary allows you to address all waterfront issues. If you are in the coastal area, you should consult New York State's official Coastal Area Map which designates the coastal boundaries for the entire State. In many communities, the State-designated coastal boundary is adequate and is the boundary used in the LWRP. In some communities, however, preliminary review of waterfront resources, problems, and opportunities may indicate that one or more revisions to the boundary will be necessary to advance the LWRP policies and projects. If a revision of the boundary is recommended, the LWRP document should state the reasons for the proposed change.

### **Section II: Inventory and analysis of existing conditions**

This section involves data collection, review and analysis presented in a narrative form and supported by maps, charts, and photographs.

The LWRP will include the inventory and analysis of existing conditions that you undertook to help you understand what your waterfront has to offer. This will cover a brief description of findings related to the developed, natural, public, and working waterfronts. It will outline key waterfront issues.

Many of these issues will have emerged in your visioning and goal-setting activities. The inventory and analysis will provide information on



---

these issues and begin to outline how they may be tackled. For example, the community may envision a future in which commercial fishing will be a strong economic generator, but existing zoning and land use regulations discourage commercial fishing in favor of recreational boating or residential uses. Or, perhaps new uses have been envisioned, but site evaluation and clean-up must take place before the new uses can be implemented.

Inventory findings will also be used as the basis for developing local waterfront revitalization policies, identifying land and water uses and projects, and outlining implementation techniques and strategies.

### ***Section III: Understanding and reflecting State policies***

This section refines existing statewide waterfront policies that apply to a community's unique waterfront area.

One of the most important roles of the LWRP is to refine New York State's policies for coastal areas and inland waterways to better reflect local conditions. The New York State Waterfront Revitalization of Coastal Areas and Inland Waterways Act establishes policies for the appropriate use and protection of the State's coasts and waterways ([www.nyswaterfronts.com/consistency\\_coastalpolicies.asp](http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/consistency_coastalpolicies.asp)).

These policies have been refined to take into account regional and local considerations. On Long Island Sound, the policies have been

refined in the Long Island Sound Regional Coastal Management Program. In New York City, the policies have been refined in the City's Waterfront Revitalization Program ([www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/wrp/wrp.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/wrp/wrp.shtml)). Throughout the State, many communities have refined these policies through their Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs.

The following outline of State policies for managing coastal areas and inland waterways provides the organizational structure for you to use in refining statewide policies.

#### Developed Coast Policies

Policy 1 Foster a pattern of development that enhances community character, preserves open space, makes efficient use of infrastructure, makes beneficial use of a coastal location, and minimizes adverse effects of development.

Policy 2 Preserve historic resources.

Policy 3 Enhance visual quality and protect scenic resources.

#### Natural Coast Policies

Policy 4 Minimize loss of life, structures, and natural resources from flooding and erosion.

Policy 5 Protect and improve water quality.

Policy 6 Protect and restore the quality and function of ecosystems.

Policy 7 Protect and improve air quality.

Policy 8 Minimize environmental degradation from solid waste and hazardous substances and wastes.

#### Public Coast Policy

Policy 9 Provide for public access to, and recreational use of, coastal waters, public lands, and public resources.

#### Working Coast Policies

Policy 10 Protect water-dependent uses and promote siting of new water-dependent uses in suitable locations.

Policy 11 Promote sustainable use of living marine resources.

Policy 12 Protect agricultural lands.

Policy 13 Promote appropriate use and development of energy and mineral resources.

Local policies are prepared after the determination of waterfront revitalization area boundaries and completion of the inventory and analysis of existing conditions. Before beginning to work on local waterfront revitalization policies, you should contact the Division of Coastal Resources for guidance. Development of waterfront revitalization policies is usually a collaborative review, discussion, and writing process.

---

Using the language of the State or regional policy statements as a starting point, you will refine these policies to reflect local conditions and issues, creating the policy framework to achieve your vision for the community and its waterfront. Your local policies will generally reflect statewide policies and include standards set forth in those local regulations that ensure implementation of your waterfront program within the community.



*Saugerties Lighthouse, Hudson River*



*Harlem, Hudson River*

The policies are critical elements in LWRP implementation. These policies will guide your efforts to create and maintain a clean, accessible, and prosperous waterfront. They are used to determine the appropriateness of public agency decisions that affect the use and protection of your waterfront, to help set priorities for public and private investment in your waterfront, and to improve the management of your waterfront. They are a decision-making tool used to evaluate the potential effects of future local, State and federal actions on the waterfront. These actions are required by law to be consistent with the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.

#### ***Section IV: Identifying the proposed land and water uses and projects***

This section describes future land and water uses anticipated as part of waterfront revitalization plans and identifies key improvement projects designed to stimulate revitalization and redevelopment. It will be supported by maps, schematic designs, and photographs.

Determining the proposed land and water uses creates a cohesive, physical plan for the waterfront area that both reflects and implements the policies of the LWRP. The process of developing proposed land and water uses is one of synthesis, in which the community's policies for the use and protection of its waterfront resources are considered along with development potential and development constraints - each of which is determined by several often interrelated, physical and social factors.

Identifying potential waterfront revitalization projects is a key element of the LWRP. Throughout the planning process, many potential projects are likely to be identified that can further your vision. The LWRP provides a framework for presenting these projects and outlining how they can be implemented. These potential projects or implementation actions will be organized under broad topic areas such as projects to increase public access; brownfield redevelopment; or habitat restoration. Inclusion of projects in the LWRP will enhance the likelihood of successful grant applications for a variety of State funding sources.

An initial list of potential projects will result from taking a look around and understanding what your waterfront has to offer. Previously completed local, regional, and statewide planning documents can provide ideas regarding potential waterfront revitalization projects. Other project ideas may be identified during the visioning process or in discussions with key stakeholders. A reasonable time frame should be established for implementing these projects and outlined in your LWRP.

You should consider both short and long-term actions. In identifying project priorities you should consider:

- Catalyst projects which pave the way for other recommendations to be implemented
- Showing early successes with projects that can be quickly completed, establishing momentum and building a track record
- Projects that include partnerships and cooperation with other stakeholders
- Projects that address multiple priorities and recommendations
- Actions which draw attention to the LWRP

Projects included in the LWRP document should be presented as concise proposals. While project descriptions should be brief, it is useful to prepare them in such a way that they can easily be translated into grant applications or other funding requests. Each project description should include the name of the project, a brief statement regarding why the project is needed and/or how the project will benefit the community or waterfront, a description of the key steps involved in project implementation, a summary of estimated costs, a description of implementation partners, and an implementation timetable.

### ***Section V: Identifying techniques for local implementation***

This section describes how the community will implement the vision and policies presented in its LWRP.

Once the projects and other implementation actions have been defined and the timetable established, the community should outline the local tools and techniques it will use to implement the plan.

Communities have access to a range of tools and techniques that can be used to implement the waterfront plan and make it an essential document for the community.

The tools and techniques for local implementation can be organized by four categories:

- Local laws necessary to implement the LWRP
- Management structure necessary to implement the LWRP
- Financial resources necessary to implement the LWRP
- Other public and private actions necessary to implement the LWRP

As you assessed your waterfront, you also identified the local laws that your community has enacted. In this section, you will carefully review



*Amagansett, East Hampton*



*Queens West, East River*





*Lake George*



*Tonawanda, Erie Canal*



*Lewiston, Niagara River*

and analyze existing local laws and the LWRP policies and projects. You will determine the extent to which these existing local laws implement the LWRP. Your evaluation may show that new local laws are needed to address an issue, or that an existing local law needs to be amended. Before the LWRP can be approved by the Secretary of State, the local laws necessary to implement your LWRP must be enacted by the municipality.

One of the local laws that will be required is a local consistency law that ensures that local actions are consistent with the LWRP. This local law stipulates which agency reviews waterfront actions and the criteria used in the decision-making process. Model waterfront consistency laws can be provided by the Division of Coastal Resources.

In addition to adopting implementing laws, the community should determine the best management structure to implement the LWRP and identify the organization or individuals best positioned to oversee implementation and coordination of the LWRP. This will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, Taking It One Step at a Time - Fulfilling Your Vision.

Your vision will not happen without a commitment to provide the staff and financial resources needed to carry out the plan. In this section of the LWRP, the community should identify the funds needed to implement the LWRP, including the proposed projects and routine administration of the program. Both

public and private financial resources should be considered. In cases where State or federal funding is needed, the specific funding program should be identified. Linking the plan with a multi-year capital program and an annual operating budget is another way to assure plan implementation. As each project identified in the plan is readied for development, detailed budgets will be developed, and where appropriate, referenced in the community's Capital Improvement Program or annual budget process.

#### **Adoption and approval of the LWRP**

Many State and federal partners view formal adoption as a reflection of the community consensus on the LWRP. When the LWRP is complete, the local government will formally adopt it and submit it to the Secretary of State for approval. Adoption makes clear that the plan will be a policy document which guides development over successive administrations. The Division of Coastal Resources can guide you through the adoption and approval steps.

## Case Study: Rochester

The City of Rochester ([www.cityofrochester.gov](http://www.cityofrochester.gov)) has moved forward aggressively to implement projects identified in its Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, undertaking public investments in shoreline areas that have attracted private investment, stimulated economic growth, and substantially increased public recreation and access opportunities.

The Local Waterfront Revitalization Program included comprehensive redevelopment plans and identified specific projects:

- Developing a mixed-use, waterfront center/festival site and enhancing existing water-oriented recreational, commercial, and public access points at the Port Authority site
- Developing another mixed-use waterfront district through enhancement of water-oriented recreation and public access opportunities, construction of new housing, and rehabilitation of existing commercial facilities
- Developing a boat launch facility with adjacent public access and water-related recreational activities along the east bank of the Genesee River
- Implementing improvements at numerous existing park and recreational facilities including public access improvements, enhancement of existing water-oriented facilities, and

development of new water-oriented recreational facilities

One of the primary implementation tools involved zoning modifications. The City's River Harbor (RH) zoning district was amended to include a purpose statement emphasizing the importance of preserving and enhancing the recreational character and visual quality of the river harbor area, preserving and promoting public access to shoreline areas, and encouraging tourism in waterfront areas. Allowed uses in the River Harbor district were also modified to permit a broader range of water-dependent, -enhanced and -related uses including facilities such as marinas, boat launches, docks, and public walkways. A new Harbor Town Design Overlay District was also adopted, requiring a certificate of design compliance for certain types of new development in the shore zone. Within the overlay district, design approval is based on specific design guidelines for landscaping, signage, visual compatibility, site development, and similar factors.







RESTORED DAY LINER DOCK AT KINGSTON POINT



WATERFRONT PARK CHARACTER SKETCH



STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS ALONG SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT



SKETCH LOOKING NORTHWEST TOWARDS BROADWAY / EAST STRAND STREET INTERSECTION



SKETCH LOOKING EAST ALONG EAST STRAND STREET AT MARITIME MUSEUM



WATERFRONT PARK RECONFIGURATION CONCEPT

- LEGEND**
- Marsh Areas
  - Kingston Point Signage
  - Historic Waterfront District Signage
  - Pedestrian Circulation
  - Vehicular Circulation
  - Current Buildings
  - Proposed Buildings
  - Current Parks
  - Proposed Parks
  - Current Tracks
  - New Tracks

Approximate Scale: 1" = 200'

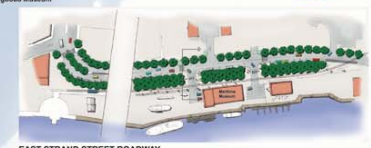
- Boaters Parking Spaces
- Reconstructed Parking Lot 40-50 Cars
- Existing Pavement
- Proposed Boat Launch w/ Cove
- Existing Softball Field
- Parking for Noah Hotel
- Proposed Noah Hotel Site
- Potential Ferry Connection
- Boat Dock
- Concession for Canoe - Kayak & Bike Rentals
- Covered Picnic / Ball Field Launch (non-motorized)
- Potential Site for Seasonal Slips/Barge Moorings
- Potential Bridge Site for Small, Non-Motorized Boat Outfit to Roundout Creek

- Potential Reconstructed Trolley Line
- Trolley Museum Enhancements
  - Intermodal Theme
  - Platform
  - Facade Improvement
- Potential Hiking Trail to Park Overlook
- Landscaping Buffer
- 200,000 sq ft Commercial Development
- 100,000 sq ft of new four retail
- 100,000 sq ft second floor commercial
- Interpretive neighborhood
- Comprehensive plans
- Future Senior Center/Housing
- Future Playground
- Proposed Park
- 200 Car Parking
- Transient Docking
- Shared Docking for Transient Boaters and Occasional Cruise Ship
- Slip Van Winkle - River Cruise Boat
- Eating Rink / Water Feature
- Major Coach Pick-up / Drop-off
- w/ 40+ Car parking
- Cornell Steamship Building
  - Visual & performing arts center
  - Artist retail
  - Artist housing
- Milner's Steel Building
- Rosita's Restaurant
- Maritime Museum
- Existing "Rip Van Winkle" Dock
- Waterfront Park / Plaza
- Boardwalk Over Wetland
- Proposed Environmental Education Center
- Potential Future Home of Tugboat Museum
- Destination Restaurant
- 12,000 sq ft
- Boat Launch
- Permanent Ship Exhibit



CONCEPT ROAD SECTION EAST STRAND STREET AT MARITIME MUSEUM

- Regrade for Potential Festival / Event Site
- Kingston Beach
  - Enhance Existing Boat Ramp
  - Reconfigure Parking
- Heritage Oil Site
- Study Potential Future Uses
- Provide Riverfront Access
- Carousel
- Restrooms w/ Seasonal Concessions
- 400 Person Outdoor Amphitheater w/ Floating Stage
- Restored Day Liner Dock



EAST STRAND STREET ROADWAY RECONFIGURATION CONCEPT

RIVER STREET PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

SYNTHESIS

# Kingston Waterfront Development Implementation Plan

City of Kingston, Office of Economic and Community Development, 845.334.3960

Edwards and Kelcey

Transportation Concepts

Swiger Associates  
Economic Development

March 26, 2003



# CHAPTER SIX: TAKING IT ONE STEP AT A TIME - FULFILLING YOUR VISION

---

In this chapter, you'll work through the following steps:

- Ensuring success - organizing for implementation
- Project planning, financing, and implementation

Now that you have formalized a plan and strategy for bringing new life and energy to your community by enhancing your waterfront, it is time to implement your vision. Your success will depend on how you organize your community and manage the implementation of the various projects that will fulfill your vision.

## Ensuring success - organizing for implementation

Completing a LWRP or some other type of plan for your waterfront often generates a feeling of closure in the community and on the part of those involved in the planning work. But if your plan is going to make a difference - enhancing the waterfront and revitalizing the community - it must be used. One way to help ensure success is to put the right organization in place to implement the plan.

Early in the LWRP development process, most communities establish a coordinating and oversight committee, often known as the waterfront advisory committee (WAC). If you already have a committee to guide you through the planning process, you should think about

using this committee to oversee the implementation of the plan. The committee structure is already in place, partnerships have already been developed, and everyone is aware of what needs to be done to make the waterfront vision a reality. If you don't have a committee, then now is the time to ask if one would be helpful as you set out to implement your plan. Advice on how to establish an oversight committee can be found in Chapter Two of this guidebook.

If you have a committee in place, this is a good time to re-evaluate who is on the committee. Do you still have the key stakeholders involved? Are there individuals or groups that should be involved now that you are focused on implementation? You may want to broaden the membership base and consider breaking out into specific sub-committees focused on particular topics or projects, for instance, sub-committees to deal with harbor management, public access, or the redevelopment of a particular waterfront parcel. Remember, it is important to recruit the "movers and shakers" to be on the committee - the people who others listen to, and have the experience, personal connections, and resources to make things happen.

The committee will now be responsible for overall management and coordination of the LWRP and the implementation of its policies and projects. The committee's tasks will likely include:

- Advising the local government on implementation, priorities, work assignments, timetables, and budgetary requirements of the LWRP

- Reviewing direct local government actions and funding and permitting actions including applications for site plans, zone changes, subdivisions, and public works projects in the waterfront area; and advising the appropriate agency as to their consistency with the LWRP policies
- Seeking funding from State, federal, or other sources to finance projects under the LWRP
- Coordinating with other committees, such as the Planning Board, Zoning Board, and Historic Preservation Commission, and with nonprofit organizations and community groups to implement the LWRP
- Reviewing proposed actions of State agencies within the waterfront area to identify any conflicts with the LWRP, advising the local government and State agency of these conflicts, and participating in discussions to resolve conflicts
- Reviewing proposed federal actions referred to the local government by the Division of Coastal Resources, and advising the local government on the consistency of the action
- Ongoing monitoring of the LWRP and its procedures by developing measurable performance indicators to review the program's overall success in achieving its revitalization goals



*Tuscarora Bay, Wilson*



*North Tonawanda, Erie Canal*

In some communities, the development of the plan may have been handled by an existing board, such as the planning board or a conservation advisory committee, or by assigning the responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the plan to existing staff, such as in the Planning Department, Community Development or Natural Resources Department. Now is the time to see if this arrangement still works. Do you have the staff and expertise to implement your projects? If you need more help, you may want to consider hiring a waterfront coordinator or a planning consultant to coordinate and advance your projects.

The waterfront coordinator will be responsible for managing, directing, and coordinating the implementation of a plan and its projects. The waterfront coordinator will make sure that all aspects of a project, including additional planning, grant writing and administration, design, permits, environmental review and construction, are completed in an appropriate and timely fashion. A waterfront coordinator can oversee all contractors and consultants, and also make sure that all stakeholders and partners are kept up-to-date and involved in the project.

### Project planning, financing, and implementation

Each project identified in your plan will likely require additional planning, feasibility analysis, engineering, design, and consultation before it can be implemented or constructed. Because you have already done some initial planning as

to how and when your projects should be implemented, you might be tempted to rush into action. However, before you act you need to formulate a carefully considered game plan. Take the time to discuss and plan your approach with your partners. This will not only avoid costly mistakes, it will strengthen consensus and support for your project.

It is essential to establish an action agenda for each project as you begin to implement your vision. But don't panic - we are not talking about a repeat of your waterfront planning initiative. This is a concise action-oriented agenda that is focused on steps that you will follow to implement your project.

Like your visioning and planning process, project action agendas are best developed collaboratively. Depending on who is involved in your project, a series of facilitated workshops is often the best approach to starting a project. Bring together the key stakeholders, diverse interest groups, resource experts, and others who are involved in your project. See if there are others you want to include to expand your partnerships. Remember, it might take several sessions to reach consensus on your action agenda, and you will continually need to re-evaluate it as the project advances.

## Case Study: Mamaroneck

The long-term success of the Town of Mamaroneck and the Village of Larchmont Local Waterfront Revitalization Program has been made possible by incorporating waterfront management into day-to-day municipal management.

Adopted in 1986, the Program dealt with flood control, water quality improvements, preservation of wetlands and conservation areas, and public recreation. Grants received as a result of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program have supported watershed planning to reduce nonpoint source pollution, to restore significant marshland areas, and to stabilize streambeds. In addition, the local program has served as a legal foundation for zoning changes, which were challenged and upheld, in part, due to their incorporation in the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. By the early 1990's, many of the projects identified in the original plan had been implemented. In 1995, the community amended the LWRP providing the foundation for its continued commitment to coastal zone management.

This success can be traced to the strong base of community involvement. The steering committee for the initial plan was carefully designed to ensure that all stakeholders - from local business owners to local yacht owners - had a voice. With over 20 individuals, the committee was large, but with the help of a

neutral facilitator it was able to produce a program that is still considered visionary by community members today.

Building on this foundation, the Town and Village were able to institutionalize the communities' commitment to the waterfront by creating the Coastal Zone Management Commission. This bi-municipal commission is responsible for determining whether Village and Town actions are consistent with the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and for recommending actions and projects to advance the waterfront program. Members of this commission are appointed by the Village and Town Boards, with the chair of the commission alternating between residents of the two municipalities.

In its role of monitoring the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, the commission has maintained liaisons to permitting boards and commissions in both the Town and Village, ensuring that all decisions in both municipalities are consistent with the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. The commission has also been responsible for producing annual status reports which have kept the communities focused on the goals identified in the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and ensuring that it is a document that informs day-to-day decision-making.





---

Your project action agenda will specify the following:

- the tasks to be performed
- the techniques to be used
- the resources needed
- the people to be involved and areas of responsibility
- the time frame for action

By pulling these elements together, your action agenda outlines how a project will be organized, marketed, managed, and completed - one step at a time. Your agenda should be documented in writing, but you do not need to go overboard with detail. Keep it short and simple. Use tables and charts where appropriate, and illustrate it with maps and plans to communicate clearly.

When preparing the action agenda, include a brief summary explaining how the proposed project relates to the established vision. By doing this repeatedly as projects are planned, you can anchor the vision statement in the minds of various stakeholders and help the community at large to understand how each individual project is part of accomplishing the overall long-term vision for your waterfront and community.

A project action plan should describe the specific techniques and tools to implement the projects you have identified.

- If you are developing an abandoned building or site, your action agenda would identify specific tasks such as “assess the structural integrity of the building,” “understand the demographic and market trends,” “review zoning regulations,” “select a design team,” “determine the phasing of the project,” and “determine who will finance the project.”
- If you are developing a park, your action agenda would identify such tasks as “acquire the land,” “understand the likely uses and facilities to be provided,” “select a designer,” “involve the community in the design,” “conduct environmental review and get permits,” and “arrange financing.”
- If you are completing a watershed plan, your action agenda would identify specific tasks such as “establish watershed and sub-watershed boundaries,” “review existing water quality data,” “review land use and land cover patterns,” “analyze soil types,” “establish monitoring stations and collect original data,” “develop modeling,” “analyze data,” and “develop recommendations and set priorities for improvements.”

Whatever your project, your action agenda identifies how to do the project, who will do it, and when.

Your action agenda should also generate excitement in the community. You will be able to use this agenda to “sell” the project to elected officials, funding and permitting agencies, stakeholders, and the community. Throughout the process of developing your action agenda and implementing a project, sustaining consensus and community support will remain vital to your project’s success.

The community can be involved in project development through a series of project planning workshops and design charrettes. In these sessions, the public can work directly with the project team to develop the design program, select materials, create public access, and other aspects of the project. Workshops and charrettes also allow people to assess various alternatives and provide broad community input. Help create community support for each project by building community involvement into the action agenda that you develop.

As you develop your action agenda, you will need to make an assessment of the scope of work necessary to advance the project and determine those tasks that can be accomplished with in-house staff, and those tasks that need to be contracted to a consultant. Consultants can be used to flesh out projects in greater detail, analyze project feasibility, put together financing deals, analyze market forces and conditions related to project implementation, design and construct your projects, and assist in marketing and promotion efforts. Once the assessment is made that a consultant will be required, you will

use a process similar to the process outlined in Chapter Two of this guidebook for selection of a planning consultant. Remember that this process varies by community, based upon established local procurement requirements for contracts of different types or sizes.

Consultants working on waterfront revitalization projects might include:

- Architects, landscape architects, and urban designers who can facilitate design charrettes and provide assistance in the preparation of conceptual designs, final designs, existing conditions reports, working drawings, and specifications for waterfront projects
- Project managers to assist communities with project phasing, scheduling, securing consultants, and provide other services needed to keep projects on track and within budget
- Economists to help communities analyze market strengths and weaknesses related to project implementation
- Public relations/marketing consultants for help with the promotion and marketing of waterfront revitalization efforts
- Financial consultants who can facilitate financing plans related to project implementation
- Environmental consultants to provide guidance related to brownfields cleanup

- Ecological consultants to provide guidance related to natural resource identification and analysis
- Transportation planners and engineers who can help understand transportation needs and help in project assessment and design

### *Project financing*

Your action plan will outline how you will fund the implementation of your projects. Communities use many different creative funding strategies to finance projects. Depending on the size and scope, some projects will have one designated funding source, while others will have multiple sources of support. Some projects may be fully funded at the outset, while others will be phased with only initial funding available and will require ongoing fund-raising and grant writing to ensure completion. Increasingly, many communities will be called upon to develop partnerships which leverage and combine an array of public and private sector sources of funding.

Communities rely heavily on grant assistance to complete many waterfront plans and projects. The Environmental Protection Fund, Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act, Community Development Block Grant, and Community Renewal funding are good examples of programs that can help you enhance your waterfront and revitalize your community. By using their own capital funds, staff costs, in-kind services, and the value of community volunteers as a match to public and private grants,



*Schoen Place - Pittsford, Erie Canal*



*Oswego*



*Battery Park, Manhattan*

## Case Study: Kingston

Located at the confluence of the Hudson River and the Rondout Creek, the City of Kingston adopted its Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) in 1992 and has been successfully implementing it ever since. The City has sought public and private funding for projects identified in its LWRP and the result is a lively waterfront.

The City's primary focus has been on revitalizing the Rondout Creek area. Since the LWRP was adopted, Kingston has made great strides in bringing people to the waterfront, attracting residents and visitors to the restaurants and small businesses which have capitalized on the water-based recreational projects sponsored by the City. The transformation is highlighted in the West and East Strand sections along the Creek. A framework for implementing these projects was formalized in the Kingston Waterfront Development Implementation Plan prepared in 2002 with a Department of State Environmental Protection Fund LWRP grant.

Kingston has learned that it is important to involve local stakeholders, particularly waterfront property owners, to create solutions that work for all. The planning process was overseen by a Steering Committee that included property and business owners, Scenic Hudson, the Division of Coastal Resources, waterfront museums, nonprofit organizations, and the

City. Community meetings at each step of the process have incorporated resident and stakeholder input. A series of meetings with waterfront owners created understanding of short- and long-term needs.

As outlined in the LWRP and Implementation Plan, the City's goal of making the Rondout waterfront an attractive, culturally vibrant district, is now a reality, with shops, restaurants, recreation, events and waterfront amenities. Through adoption of design standards, new development must be consistent with the area's natural and historic character. Incentive zoning, created during the LWRP process, allows Kingston to obtain public easements from private property owners on the waterfront. These easements have been key to creating a continuous walkway along the Rondout Creek. Brownfields, such as the L&M Auto Recycling Facility, have been cleaned up and new uses are proposed for former industrial sites such as the Forst Meat Packing Plant. Odor and appearance problems associated with the adjacent wastewater treatment plant are being mitigated. The last Creek-side oil tanks along the Kingston side of the Creek were recently demolished and for the first time in 75 years these tanks do not block waterfront views.

Public funding spent in this area is credited with encouraging private investment. For every public dollar invested on the waterfront there are \$8 of private money dedicated to projects there, now

totaling \$10 million. As a result, Kingston's waterfront is alive with activity. This waterfront renaissance has brought the City a long way from the boarded-up, neglected place it once was. Kingston's success shows other communities how they might revitalize their own forgotten waterfronts.

The City is now turning its attention to its Hudson River shoreline as several large parcels are being proposed for mixed-use development projects.





---

communities are able to leverage funding to achieve their vision of an enhanced waterfront.

Successful completion of public improvements can be supplemented by a wide range of funding and implementation techniques to encourage private redevelopment on the waterfront. Common financing tools that encourage public - private partnerships are low-interest loans, tax incentives, Empire and Enterprise Zones programs, joint venture partnerships, land ownership, and lease arrangements. A municipality can aid a development project by directing municipal capital and public works expenditures to coincide with the needs of the development.

### *Grant assistance*

The majority of community waterfront plans will be funded, at least in part, by grants. There are many grant programs available from the federal and State government, nonprofit groups, and charitable foundations that can help you achieve your vision. Some examples include grants for:

- waterfront and community planning
- the redevelopment of underused waterfronts
- the cleanup of brownfields and contaminated sites
- the redevelopment of abandoned buildings

- public access and recreation
- improvements to protect water quality and restore natural habitats
- low-income families to restore residential buildings
- the rehabilitation of historic buildings

As you look for grants and other funding assistance, it is important to:

- Know what you want to achieve with the funding you are seeking
- Identify possible sources of funding assistance for what you want to achieve
- Identify the scope of the grant program
- Find out if the wants on your list and the possible sources are compatible
- Make sure you can meet the requirements that come with a grant award, especially with regard to local match

Grant awards are highly competitive. Most grants rank proven capacity as a crucial factor, so it is important to establish credibility with the grant making organizations. They need to know who you are and to learn about your project and your capacity to make it happen.

Once you have found a grant program that might help you, identify the requirements for the grant

and ensure that you are eligible or can partner with someone who is. The key to successfully completing a grant application within the application deadline is to be as organized as possible, and to think the project through, in advance, to the greatest extent possible:

- Make sure that you can meet any match requirement. In most cases, the grant match will be a cash contribution, perhaps derived from municipal revenues or a private donation. Sometimes it is in the form of donated land, buildings, goods, services, or facilities rental.
- Be as organized as possible and use the guidance provided in the application to fill out the relevant forms.
- Make sure that you answer all the questions, provide all the supporting information that is required and that your budget information and schedules are realistic.



*Wilson*



*Buffalo Beach, Lake Erie*



*Lake George*



*Syracuse Inner Harbor*

- Graphic materials such as architectural drawings, plans, maps, and photographs can help the grant reviewer to understand your project and letters of support from community groups, government agencies, and nonprofits will show widespread support for your project.
- As you pull your application together, make sure you have all the required forms, certifications, and signatures, and make sure you follow the submission requirements.

Remember, being successful in obtaining grant assistance requires that you target the grant programs that are right for your project, or a component of your project. No matter what the grant program, you should always make sure that you clearly specify why your project is worth doing, what is involved in successfully implementing it, and what end result and benefits of project implementation can be expected.

### *Finding out about grants and funding assistance*

Opportunities for grant assistance from public and nonprofit agencies are generally distributed by direct mail or announced in press releases, newsletters, or websites. Make sure you are on these mailing lists and collect information on grant programs. Keep a calendar with grant schedules on it so that you are aware of your opportunities and deadlines. You should also talk to others who have received grants and discuss your ideas with

those who award the grants. They will probably know of additional sources of funding.

Federal grants are usually announced in the Federal Register ([www.gpoaccess.gov/fr](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr)), and State grants in the State Register ([www.dos.state.ny.us/info/register.htm](http://www.dos.state.ny.us/info/register.htm)). Another way of finding out about grants that might be available is to visit a grants clearinghouse on the Internet. The New York State Smart Growth website ([www.SmartGrowthNY.com](http://www.SmartGrowthNY.com)) provides information and links to State agency funding programs. The online Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance ([www.cfda.gov](http://www.cfda.gov)) gives you access to a database of all federal programs available to State and local governments; domestic public, quasi-public, and private profit and nonprofit organizations and institutions; specialized groups; and individuals. You can search this database to find grant and funding opportunities meeting the requirements for your project. Another excellent source of information on all aspects of grants is the Foundation Center ([www.foundationcenter.org](http://www.foundationcenter.org)). Its mission is to promote public understanding of philanthropy and to help grant-makers and grant-seekers succeed. The center is a valuable resource for a wide range of information on grantsmanship and provides training on the grant-seeking process. A full range of grant possibilities are discussed in the Appendix.

One of the first grant sources you should examine is the New York State Environmental Protection Fund. This is the State's first permanent fund dedicated to addressing a broad

range of environmental needs. Through the Environmental Protection Fund's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, the Division of Coastal Resources can fund planning, design, feasibility studies, and construction projects that advance preparation or implementation of Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs. Any municipality located on the State's coastal waters or on a designated inland waterway is eligible, although some restrictions apply. Program details and priorities are reviewed annually, but eligible activities generally include grants to:

- Initiate a community participation program that introduces local leaders and community residents to the waterfront planning process, generates a community consensus for the future of the waterfront, and develops a vision and revitalization strategy
- Complete or implement a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, including project specific planning or design and construction of projects
- Prepare and implement redevelopment strategies for urban waterfront areas where redevelopment can provide new public access, spur economic activities, and improve environmental quality
- Develop and implement waterbody management plans
- Implement the New York State Coastal Resources Interpretive Program by

developing interpretive signage, and start or expand educational and interpretive programs designed to build public awareness and stewardship of coastal resources

- Plan, develop, and market blueway routes

### *Constructing improvements*

Using the action plan for each project as a guide, you are ready to start constructing the improvements to your waterfront. Obviously, the way you approach each project will vary with project types. For instance, different partners will be involved in different project types; different regulations will apply; and simple projects might not need to go through every step. But it helps to be organized and take the implementation of a project one step at a time. Below is a typical approach you might follow on many construction projects, from a simple access and drainage improvement at a street end to a large park development or the redevelopment of an abandoned waterfront parcel. Implementation of the project might be completed by municipal staff, but more often a community will hire a consulting architect or engineer to design and manage the improvements.



*Freeport's Nautical Mile*



*East River*



## Case Study: Greenport

Greenport, Long Island has a rich and colorful maritime history. But, by the 1970's, the decline of traditional industries caused the waterfront to deteriorate. In 1979, a proposal to convert a former shipyard into condominiums forced the Village to make decisions that would shape its future.

Controversy raged over whether or not the traditional maritime commercial waterfront would be converted into a residential waterfront. Village residents realized that Greenport's economic health depended on its waterfront.

To protect its waterfront's future, the Village developed a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program with a vision to use Greenport's identity as a historic and working waterfront community to revitalize the Village. Throughout the planning process, Village Trustees reviewed draft documents and held regular public meetings to involve and inform residents and obtain their support for waterfront revitalization plans. Additional meetings were held with community groups, such as the Greenport Rotary Club, Greenport Merchant's Association, the Chamber of Commerce, property owners, boaters, and others.

Following extensive public involvement, the Village revised its zoning laws to protect traditional commercial and industrial uses of the waterfront, adopted a historic preservation law,

and has developed numerous partnerships to create a working waterfront that respects its heritage.

Illustrating the private sector response to the protection of waterfront commercial zoning and uses, a single investor has redeveloped the vacant Barstow Shipyard into the state-of-the-art Stidd Systems shipbuilding facility, employing 40 people and manufacturing a wide range of products for civilian and military clients.

The downtown has also come alive, spurred on by the success of Greenport's key project - Mitchell Park. In 1988, the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program recognized that the abandoned Mitchell parcel could be the key to revitalizing the community and identified the need for a harborwalk. Today, the centerpiece of Greenport's revival is Mitchell Park and the harborwalk from one end of the downtown waterfront to the other.

The Village acquired the vacant site through foreclosure proceedings and in 1995 held a highly successful design competition for the reuse of the site. Following collaboration with public and private sector partners and funding from at least five government agencies, the first phase of the park was completed in 2001. Improvements include a harborwalk, amphitheater, and a stunning glass pavilion housing a turn-of-the-century carousel. More improvements are to come. ([www.greenportvillage.com/mitchellpark.html](http://www.greenportvillage.com/mitchellpark.html))

Mitchell Park is part of a reinvigorated waterfront that is attracting tourists, generating sustained growth for Greenport's tax base, and stimulating reinvestment in surrounding neighborhoods. Managing the Village's success and maintaining quality of life for all residents has become Greenport's biggest challenge.



---

## *Land assembly techniques - acquiring key parcels*

No matter if the project is being implemented by the public or private sector, a common challenge to waterfront revitalization is the fact that areas targeted for improvements or redevelopment often consist of separate parcels of privately owned property. It is often a challenge to accommodate the individual schedules and interests of the various owners and organizations to assemble the key parcels of land. In overcoming this challenge, communities have tried a number of successful approaches including:

- Community visioning sessions which build shared agreement about how and where redevelopment should occur - convincing property owners to sell, transfer or donate property
- Acquisition of land through simple contractual negotiations for land purchase by the municipality or a development authority
- Purchasing available parcels or working with local and State government agencies to work out a land swap, or similar deal, essentially trading one parcel for another to accommodate needs and goals of buyer and seller
- Tax and mortgage foreclosures
- Relocation planning and financing which can assess current property owners' needs and identify appropriate sites and financing
- Bringing the various owners together with the redevelopment agency to reach a negotiated agreement regarding the transfer and redevelopment of targeted land
- Development of a Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) in which individual property owners use their land to become investors in the redevelopment entity and share in the profits of redevelopment as land is sold or leased
- Eminent domain proceedings, that municipal entities and certain development authorities may use to condemn property for a compelling public purpose or to address a health and safety threat

## *Conducting a site reconnaissance*

It is crucial that project participants have at least a preliminary analysis of the conditions of the site as early as possible in the project. The initial analysis will generally take the form of a written and illustrated report that includes the following components:

- site survey showing extent of project boundary
- identification of ownership/grant/lease status of any lands to be incorporated into the design
- soil and, as appropriate, core samplings to determine site stability
- topography and hydrology
- natural resources, including location of mature trees
- condition of man-made structures or facilities on or adjacent to the site
- above and below ground infrastructure
- environmental conditions
- access to local transportation network
- view corridors
- historic and archeological resources
- indication of any critical conditions requiring immediate stabilization or repair and including a cost estimate for the recommended work

It is especially important to understand the potential impact of the current ownership and of the zoning and other regulations on the proposed project. You should try to identify potential obstacles that might occur down the road.

- Who owns the project site? If it is not already in public ownership, will the current owner help facilitate or hinder the proposed project? Is it for sale or lease? If so, what are the asking price and terms? Would the owner consider being a partner in the project? What are the current property taxes? Are back taxes owed on the property? Are there any encumbrances (mortgages, liens, easements)?



Port Jefferson, Long Island Sound



Syracuse Inner Harbor



Hudson

- Is the existing zoning of the site conducive for the proposed project? If not, what is involved in securing zoning and site plan approval? Will the community support the proposed project and help facilitate any regulatory approvals? Is the site a known or potential brownfield? If so, what investigations have been completed and what is known of the potential contaminants? Is the building or site listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places, or eligible for listing? What permits will be needed?

At this stage, the scope of work specifically does not include the preparation of plans and specifications, construction documents or cost estimates except for any emergency stabilization work that may be needed.

### *Conceptual or schematic design*

After you have fully understood what you have to work with, it is time to begin to discuss design alternatives. Schematic designs establish the concepts and design characteristics of a project and are prepared based on the pre-design consultations and an analysis of project requirements. Preliminary cost estimates should be prepared which can help determine a scope, cost, and schedule needed for each project. Zoning and planning requirements and related permitting processes should be checked and other research may be undertaken. Options may be presented and alternatives evaluated. Coordination with permitting and funding agencies is essential at this stage in design

development to ensure that your project is acceptable. It is important to document the federal, State, and local permit and environmental review requirements for your project and how the requirements will be satisfied by the design. Early in the project development process, prepare a project timeline incorporating as many permit approval schedules as possible. Revise it periodically as the timeline progresses. Remember that construction on a project cannot commence until the SEQR process is complete and all required permits have been issued.

### *Detailed design*

Design development follows as conceptual plans and schematic drawings are worked up in more detail to evaluate alternative approaches and reflect programmatic needs, technical aspects, site requirements, and materials. Site plans, floor plans, elevations, landscaping plans, and plans for related infrastructure improvements are developed. Key dimensions and materials will be established. Best management practices should be identified to avoid or reduce water quality impairments from upland runoff or in-water activities. It is essential that coordination with permitting and funding agencies continues throughout this stage in design development.



---

## *Working/contract documents*

This is the most work-intensive phase of project design and involves preparation of detailed working drawings and specifications to describe the project for contractors who may bid on the construction of the project. These drawings will also be used to obtain permits, which will be needed before the project can progress to the next step. The drawings typically include all types of construction details, such as:

- site and drainage plans
- floor plans, elevations and cross-sections
- framing plans and structural details
- plumbing and electrical details
- landscaping

A written specification is also prepared which may include conditions of contract. Documentation is sometimes split into two stages with minimum drawings for consent purposes followed by supplementary drawings providing the added detail required for pricing and construction.

## *Bidding phase*

The next step is securing competitive bids to hire a contractor to build your project. Your design team will assist in selecting building contractors, obtaining competitive pricing, and formalizing a contract. This process is typically specified by

local procurement and contracting requirements and, if grant funding has been made available, by requirements established by the funding agency.

Make sure that you widely advertise the availability of the bid package. The bid must clearly outline the scope of work; an explanation of the preferred format for bid submissions, including required forms; a process for proposing alternates; and logistical information about the bidding process such as how, when, and where bids should be submitted, the type of contract that will ultimately be used, and insurance and permit requirements.

Make sure that you follow your procurement policy. Notification regarding the availability of bid packages is usually sent out to contractors the community has worked with before. Solicitation of bids is also advertised in local newspapers as well as publications such as the New York State Contract Reporter.

## *Construction phase*

At the construction stage, what was on paper now becomes a building or project. Before you begin constructing your project it is essential that all your environmental reviews, permits, and other approvals are in place.

The design team can help oversee construction, administer the contract, and carry out various functions, such as:

- project initiation

- scheduling
- regular site visits and meetings
- clarifying details with the builder
- monitoring construction progress and adherence to documents
- processing variations and change orders to the contract
- certifying progress claims
- final inspections and preparation of a punch list
- checking final accounts
- closing the project

For larger projects (typically over \$5 million), a construction manager may be used. A general contractor is hired earlier in the process and is more involved in the design phase of the project. Using knowledge from a capable construction manager in the design phase can reduce costs, save time later in construction, and reduce the potential for change orders.

It is important that everyone involved in the project understands their roles and responsibilities. Municipal staff also need to monitor the performance of consultants and contractors on an ongoing basis and maintain all records associated with the disbursement of municipal revenue and compliance with all grants and permits.

---

## *Ongoing management and maintenance*

Completed projects need management and maintenance. For instance, park improvement projects need to be kept clean, grass needs to be mowed, landscaping watered, trash collected, and events coordinated. The redevelopment of abandoned buildings will involve ongoing marketing, property management, and maintenance activities. Wetland restoration projects will need close attention to make sure the plantings survive. Implementation planning must address how a project will be managed and maintained. These activities are best incorporated into a formal plan that assigns responsibilities, creates a schedule, and sets a budget. This plan should be developed at an early stage in the design of your project.

## *Interpretation and education projects*

Interpretation is explaining - in easy to understand, imaginative, and entertaining terms - the historical, natural, cultural, or recreational resources of the waterfront. Interpretation expands awareness, understanding, and appreciation for the waterfront and its resources. It can be used to attract visitors to an area, educate residents and visitors about local cultural and natural resources, and extend their visits by keeping them interested in their surroundings. Information can be communicated through interpretive signs and exhibits, audio-

visual presentations, live presentations, and publications.

Consideration should be given to the range of audiences that will use interpretive and educational materials. Potential audiences include:

- visitors to the waterfront, including first-time and repeat visitors
- shoppers in commercial districts
- recreational enthusiasts
- families on vacation
- children and adults in school groups and enrichment programs for all ages
- residents

Concepts and themes for interpretive and educational materials can be developed using information gathered when the inventory and analysis of existing conditions is completed. For example, communities may have unique or rare coastal habitats, or commercial districts and residential neighborhoods characterized by historically and architecturally significant and unique buildings. Identified concepts and themes can be communicated in brochures, signs, and other media, describing resources and restoration efforts, outlining walking and driving tours, and providing information on a wide range of topics. Interpretive and educational materials can be developed by in-house staff, consultants and volunteers.

## *Signage - The New York State Coastal Resources Interpretive Program (NYSCRIP)*

Interpretive sign systems are designed to inform. You can use them to tell a story or communicate information in a short period of time. The effectiveness of the interpretation depends on a number of factors: whether the signage has been well-planned; how well organized and engaging the information is; if it has been sited in a high visibility area; and whether the photographic or illustrated imagery is graphically interesting.

Across New York State's coasts and waterfronts a series of interpretive signage systems have appeared. Some are localized, while others encompass many miles of shoreline spanning several communities. In many cases, there is little to no coordination among these systems, with no design element linking them.

If you are thinking of creating an interpretive signage program for your waterfront, you should consider the New York State Coastal Resources Interpretive Program (NYSCRIP). The NYSCRIP signage system is designed to provide that coordinating link. Developed by the Division of Coastal Resources, this is New York's first comprehensively-designed interpretive signage system for use in all coastal and waterfront communities. Whether your community is located on marine or fresh waters, NYSCRIP can be used to interpret common themes that define New York's coasts and waterfronts.

If a person views a NYSCRIP sign on Long Island and then views another on the Hudson River and then another on the Seneca Lake, that person will recognize that all the signs feature the same design look and the messages are similar, yet unique for the community. They are part of a State-wide system.

NYSCRIP signage will be used by communities to:

- Connect people living along New York State's coasts and waterways
- Encourage residents and visitors to travel along New York State's coasts and waterways and visit historic, cultural, natural and coastal resources
- Heighten awareness of the environmental, social, and economic value of New York State's coastal and inland waterways resources

NYSCRIP establishes detailed signage design guidelines and construction specifications including layout, color schemes, and design, and offers grants for signage development. The program outlines five interpretive themes for use in the development of signage. These themes define the waterfront by use and how this use affects a sense of place.

- Living on the Waterfront - Coasts and waterfronts are habitats, not just for plants and animals, but for humans as well. This theme explores the natural rhythms of life along both natural and developed coastlines.

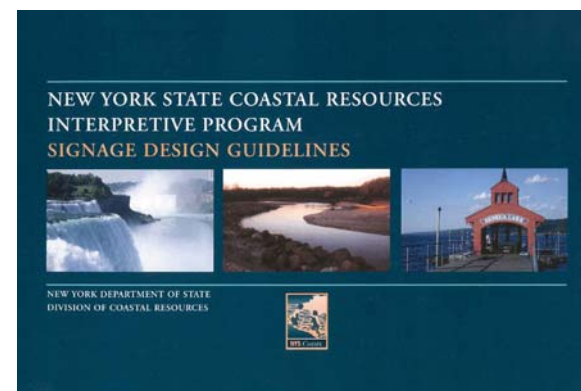
- Working on the Waterfront - Many waterfronts have been developed for commercial purposes. While some people harvest and use the natural resources of lakes, rivers, and oceans, others build and repair boats, move cargo, process fish, provide lodging, develop and build homes, and cater to tourist business.
- Enjoying the Coast - The coasts, and bodies of water adjacent to them, provide a great variety of recreational opportunities. This theme can be applied where there is swimming, fishing, boating, hiking, bird-watching or where the coast is used for relaxation and rejuvenation.
- Protecting the Waterfront - Both the natural and historic resources of the coasts and waterfronts are worth protecting. This theme illustrates what measures are being taken to protect sensitive habitats so that they may remain naturally productive.
- Historic Coasts - Along our coasts and waterfronts are important cultural and historic landmarks from our nation's past. These include lighthouses from as far back as the 18th century, forts from the early years of the republic, historic buildings, early industrial sites, and waterfronts that played a part in battles of the American Revolution. This theme addresses the historic significance of the site and the efforts to protect and preserve it.

When a community participates in NYSCRIP it is required to use the themes and approved

signage designs but may make changes, with approval from the Division of Coastal Resources, to text content and images to reflect local variations.

## Brochures

Many communities have developed brochures to communicate various messages and inform the public about waterfront amenities and resources. Some communities have created brochures to educate residents about the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program or specific aspects of the program, such as habitat restoration, preservation of historic resources, or environmental conservation efforts. Brochures can be simple tri-fold pieces consisting of black text on white or colored paper with maps, photographs and other graphics, or they can be more expensive, full-color pieces. The critical issue is that they communicate key messages about the community's waterfront and related resources to the public.





# CONCLUSION

---

This guidebook has described for you the techniques and resources available to make the most of your waterfront and revitalize your community. We began with a discussion of vision and finished with a guide to project implementation. Each of the sections provided guidance and lessons on how to make opportunities happen.

Communities with a vision succeed. It starts by recognizing that the waterfront belongs to the community. Take a closer look at your community. Local officials, community and neighborhood groups, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector are learning that a revitalized waterfront can create many benefits for their community. A Local Waterfront Revitalization Program is the means for turning community visions into reality. Take it one step at a time - and stay focused on your vision. Patience and persistence pay off.

**You can make the most of your waterfront when...**

- ✓ **You see your waterfront as the way to bring new life and energy to your community.**
- ✓ **You have generated a sense of community ownership of the waterfront.**
- ✓ **You know where you want to go.**
- ✓ **You have created a clearly defined vision for the future of your waterfront.**
- ✓ **The people who live and work in the community have bought in to your vision.**
- ✓ **You have begun building a foundation of public support and confidence.**
- ✓ **You have established partnerships and gained commitments from all stakeholders.**

- ✓ **You know what you have got to work with.**
- ✓ **You take advantage of all your resources, assets, and opportunities.**
- ✓ **You have developed a detailed plan and strategy for implementing your vision.**
- ✓ **You have the patience and persistence to work through the many phases of waterfront revitalization - one step at a time.**



*Lake George*



*Oswego*

# APPENDIX

---

## Where to find potential partners for waterfront revitalization

### Local governments

Local governments - whether county, city, town or village - may have planning, design, engineering and economic development staff, and local committees who can be instrumental in helping you revitalize your waterfront. They can provide local plans and consultant studies, such as appraisals, cost estimates, feasibility studies, market studies, reuse analyses, engineering reports, land use studies, and marketability studies. They can also provide technical assistance at all stages of developing and implementing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.

The **New York State Conference of Mayors and Municipal Officials** ([www.nycom.org](http://www.nycom.org)) can provide technical assistance to its members and holds a Main Street conference annually that addresses many issues related to the redevelopment of waterfronts and how they can link to downtowns. The **Association of Towns of the State of New York** ([www.nytowns.org](http://www.nytowns.org)) can provide technical assistance to its members and may be able to help with your project. The **New York Association of Counties** ([www.nysac.org](http://www.nysac.org)) provides information on local governments and county links.

Local governments - whether county, city or town - may have an **Industrial Development Agency (IDA)** to help develop the economic environment and support infrastructure in their municipality.

An IDA is a corporate governmental body, constituting a public benefit corporation created pursuant to General Municipal Law, Article 18-A. They are an important financing vehicle. You can contact your municipality's community development or planning office to see if your community has an IDA.

IDAs work to provide appropriate financial incentives and assistance to eligible private-sector businesses to induce the construction, expansion, or equipping of facilities to stimulate capital investment and job creation for a wide range of commercial and industrial projects. Financial assistance may involve issuance of tax-exempt or taxable bonds to cover the costs of construction, rehabilitation, and equipping of a wide range of projects. Further financing benefits that IDAs may offer are sales, mortgage, and real property tax abatements, and lease back agreements. Other types of assistance may include expediting the local development review and permitting process.

### Regional organizations

Due in part to the geographic diversity of New York State, there are many regional planning and environmental organizations. The **New York State Association of Regional Councils** ([www.dos.state.ny.us/lists/rgcoplan.html](http://www.dos.state.ny.us/lists/rgcoplan.html)) fosters coordination among neighboring communities and provides a regional approach to issues crossing municipal boundaries. The **New York State Metropolitan Planning Organizations** ([www.nysmpos.org](http://www.nysmpos.org)) provides regional planning

assistance. Other regional groups which can be helpful are **Save the Sound** ([www.savethesound.org](http://www.savethesound.org)); the **Peconic Estuary Program** ([www.peconicestuary.org](http://www.peconicestuary.org)); the **Appalachian Regional Commission** ([www.arc.gov](http://www.arc.gov)); the **Adirondack Park Agency** ([www.apa.state.ny.us](http://www.apa.state.ny.us)); the **Lake George Watershed Coalition** ([www.lakegeorge2000.org/](http://www.lakegeorge2000.org/)); the **Adirondack North Country Association** ([www.adirondack.org](http://www.adirondack.org)); the **Tug Hill Commission** ([www.tughill.org](http://www.tughill.org)); the **Catskill Watershed Corporation** (<http://cwconline.org>); the **Catskill Center** ([www.catskillcenter.org](http://www.catskillcenter.org)); the **Regional Plan Association** ([www.rpa.org](http://www.rpa.org)); the **Great Lakes Commission** ([www.glc.org](http://www.glc.org)); **Great Lakes United** ([www.glu.org](http://www.glu.org)); **Rochester Environment** ([www.rochesterenvironment.com](http://www.rochesterenvironment.com)); **Finger Lakes - Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance** ([www.flowpa.org](http://www.flowpa.org)); and **Scenic Hudson** ([www.scenichudson.org](http://www.scenichudson.org)).

### Nonprofit organizations

There are several nonprofit organizations specializing in waterfront planning and revitalization. The **Waterfront Center** ([www.waterfrontcenter.org](http://www.waterfrontcenter.org)), the **Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance** ([www.waterwire.net](http://www.waterwire.net)), and the **Working Waterfront Association** ([www.workingwaterfront.org](http://www.workingwaterfront.org)) are good starting points. The **Glynwood Center** ([www.glynwood.org](http://www.glynwood.org)) helps communities to balance economic development and conservation of natural and cultural resources. The **New York Planning Federation**

---

([www.nypf.org](http://www.nypf.org)) has information on planning and zoning for local communities.

Another source of assistance is local land trusts. Community-based land trusts are experts at helping interested landowners find ways to protect their land in the face of ever-growing development pressure. The **Land Trust Alliance** provides a full array of advice on land trusts and how they can help communities ([www.lta.org](http://www.lta.org)). The **Open Space Institute** protects significant recreational, environmental, agricultural, and historic landscapes in New York State ([www.osiny.org](http://www.osiny.org)). The **Trust for Public Land** ([www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org)) is another resource for information. Local land trusts in your area should be contacted as well. The **American Farmland Trust** ([www.farmland.org](http://www.farmland.org)) should be contacted if your community has agricultural resources.

Some conservation organizations may be useful in providing information on protecting or restoring natural habitats and river or stream corridors. The **Conservation Foundation** ([www.theconservationfoundation.org](http://www.theconservationfoundation.org)) provides assistance on land and watershed protection. The **Society of Wetland Scientists** ([www.sws.org](http://www.sws.org)) provides links to other wetlands organizations. The **National Audubon Society** ([www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)), the **Nature Conservancy** ([www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org)) and the **Sierra Club** ([www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)) are also all good sources of information and assistance.

Resource-specific organizations may be useful. These include the **Association of State**

**Floodplain Managers** ([www.floods.org](http://www.floods.org)) and the **Center for Watershed Protection** ([www.cwp.org](http://www.cwp.org)).

Parks, greenways, trails, heritage corridors, and other public spaces are important elements in waterfront planning and implementation. The **Project for Public Spaces** ([www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)) is a useful resource. The **Center for Livable Communities** ([www.lgc.org/center](http://www.lgc.org/center)) and **Partners for Livable Communities** ([www.livable.com](http://www.livable.com)) provide information on enhancing community quality, and restoring and renewing communities. The **Sustainable Communities Network** ([www.sustainable.org](http://www.sustainable.org)) and **Smart Growth** ([www.smartgrowth.org](http://www.smartgrowth.org)) are also good resources.

Community development organizations are also an important potential source of assistance. Resident-led community-based development organizations are instrumental in transforming distressed neighborhoods and communities into healthy places to live and work. Talk to your municipality's planning or community development office to find these organizations.

Your local **Business Improvement District (BID)** may also be in a position to provide redevelopment assistance. A BID is a public/private partnership through which a special assessment is used to finance improvements or services within a designated commercial area, for instance in Albany ([www.downtownalbany.org](http://www.downtownalbany.org)). Frequently, BIDs play a role in boosting local redevelopment efforts.

If your waterfront area contains historic properties, the **National Trust for Historic Preservation** can be an important partner. The Trust is a national nonprofit organization that provides leadership, education, and advocacy to save diverse historic places and revitalize communities in the United States. On its website, the Trust ([www.nthp.org](http://www.nthp.org)) provides details of its programs. It also provides links to other programs that can help with your rehabilitation.

If your waterfront is close to your community's main street or downtown, one important program that can help you understand your role in the revitalization of your community is the **National Main Street Program** ([www.mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org)). This program seeks to help communities revitalize their traditional commercial areas, using historic preservation and grassroots-based economic development. It serves as the nation's clearinghouse for information, technical assistance, research, and advocacy on preservation-based commercial district revitalization.

The **Preservation League of New York State** is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection of New York's diverse and rich heritage of historic buildings, districts, and landscapes. On its website, the Preservation League ([www.preservenys.org](http://www.preservenys.org)) provides details of its own small grant program and summaries of other grant programs that deal with the historic preservation aspects of your vision.



---

## Universities

The **Center for Community Design Research** is an outreach program within the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF) Department of Landscape Architecture. The Center works in partnership with communities, elected officials, agencies, and nonprofits to provide technical assistance, educational programs, and research projects that build community capacity to manage sustainable futures. SUNY ESF prepared the SUNY Sourcebook of Community Assistance Programs ([www.esf.edu/la/ccdr](http://www.esf.edu/la/ccdr)). The SUNY Sourcebook provides a list of SUNY-wide resources to address your redevelopment issues.

Cornell University through **Cooperative Extension** ([www.cce.cornell.edu](http://www.cce.cornell.edu)) and the **Community and Rural Development Institute** (<http://devsoc.cals.cornell.edu/outreach/cardi>) provides assistance to communities on development, environment, and agricultural issues. The Community and Rural Development Institute (CaRDI) located at Cornell University has partnered with Penn State University to create the Community and Economic Development Toolbox. This website contains a wide variety of resources and information that can strengthen community capacity and provide you with information that will help in your redevelopment project. Pace University's **Land Use Law Center** ([www.law.pace.edu/landuse](http://www.law.pace.edu/landuse)) provides assistance on the development of sustainable communities in New York State. The **Regional Institute** is a unit of the University of

Buffalo Law School, partnering with governments, foundations, businesses, civic groups and nonprofits ([www.regional-institute.buffalo.edu](http://www.regional-institute.buffalo.edu)).

## State and federal agencies

Many New York State agencies provide an array of technical and financial assistance that can support waterfront revitalization from planning through implementation. The **New York State Smart Growth** website ([www.SmartGrowthNY.com](http://www.SmartGrowthNY.com)) is an easy-to-use directory or 'portal' to these State agencies with brief descriptions of services and links to the appropriate agency website pages. Organized by "Quality Communities Principles," the website provides guidance on State agency funding programs that can help you to revitalize your waterfront.

You will find information on economic development; revitalization; transportation and neighborhoods; conservation and environment; planning; technology; and partnerships. Guidance is available here on State agency assistance including grant and financial information, technical assistance, and data and regional inventories.

The federal government offers a range of economic development programs to distressed urban and rural communities for economic renewal. The online **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance** ([www.cfda.gov](http://www.cfda.gov)) gives you access to a database of all federal programs available to State and local governments,

domestic public, quasi-public, and private profit and nonprofit organizations and institutions; specialized groups; and individuals. You can search this database to find grant and funding opportunities meeting the requirements for your waterfront project. You can then contact the office that administers the program and find out how to apply. Also available on this site are several aids to guide you in the writing of a proposal to apply for assistance.

The **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** is the source of a wealth of information relevant to waterfront communities and coastal managers. It is through NOAA that many of the nation's coastal management goals are addressed. NOAA works to protect marine fisheries and endangered species, produces charts to aid in air and nautical navigation, and partners with states to protect coastal resources. State and local coastal resource managers are one of NOAA's primary customers, as their programs play an important role in determining the fate of the nation's coastal resources. NOAA's Coastal Services Center maintains information on "Funding Opportunities for Coastal Managers" by compiling information on a variety of federal and other grant programs of interest ([www.csc.noaa.gov/funding](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/funding)).

To carry out NOAA's responsibilities under the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Office of Coastal Resources Management works directly with coastal states and territories to support the development of new Coastal Management Programs and National Estuarine Research

---

Reserves, to provide technical and financial assistance to coastal programs and reserve operations, and to promote coastal stewardship on a variety of critical coastal issues. Such issues include: coastal habitat protection and restoration; coastal hazards; public access to the shore for recreation; sustainable development of coastal communities, including urban waterfronts; and polluted runoff.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOS) can provide support and information for coastal management related to coastal and ocean science, management, response, restoration and navigation ([www.nos.noaa.gov](http://www.nos.noaa.gov)). Also included in NOS is the Coastal Services Center ([www.csc.noaa.gov](http://www.csc.noaa.gov)). The Center serves coastal resource managers and the State coastal programs bringing information, services, and technology to the nation's coastal resource managers.

The Coastal Zone Management Program ([www.coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/programs/czm.html](http://www.coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/programs/czm.html)) is a federal-state partnership dedicated to comprehensive management of the nation's coastal resources, ensuring their protection for future generations while balancing competing national economic, cultural and environmental interests. It addresses policy issues and provides State coastal management programs with technical and financial assistance in implementing their programs. New York's

partnership with the federal government is managed by the Division of Coastal Resources.

The **Department of State's Division of Coastal Resources** can provide assistance on all aspects of waterfront and community revitalization to help you make the most of what your waterfront has to offer. The Division can provide technical and financial assistance to help communities expand public access, reinvigorate urban waterfronts, restore habitats, protect scenic resources, preserve historic resources, manage water uses, improve water quality, protect against flooding and erosion, and strengthen local economies ([www.nyswaterfronts.com](http://www.nyswaterfronts.com)). The Division of Coastal Resources is the first place to contact if you are interested in revitalizing your waterfront.

The Division of Coastal Resources can help you develop partnerships with other state and federal agencies who can provide the specific information as well as technical and funding assistance - from planning through implementation.

The following summary covers some of the main State and federal agencies that you might turn to for help, organized by topic area to enable a quick search and fast results, from these links you will be able to navigate the Internet to find many other sources of information.

## **The Developed Waterfront** ***Land use and development***

### **New York State**

The **Department of State's Division of Local Government** can provide training assistance to municipalities related to zoning procedures in addition to other practical legal and technical advice ([www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss](http://www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss)).

The **Adirondack Park Agency** can provide assistance related to land use management within the boundary of the Park ([www.apa.state.ny.us/About\\_Agency](http://www.apa.state.ny.us/About_Agency)).

If you are located on the Hudson River, you may be able to seek funding from the **Hudson River Valley Greenway**. The Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council provides community planning grants and technical assistance through the "Greenway Communities Grant Program" and the "Greenway Compact Grant Program." These programs help eligible communities develop and achieve a vision for their future and assists in the development of the Greenway Compact, a regional planning strategy for the Hudson River Valley ([www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us](http://www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us)).

**Empire State Development (ESD)** can provide assistance on economic development issues ([www.nylovesbiz.com/default.asp](http://www.nylovesbiz.com/default.asp)).

---

Empire Zones are designated areas throughout the State that offer significant incentives to encourage economic development, business investment and job creation ([www.nylovesbiz.com/Tax\\_and\\_Financial\\_Incentives/Empire\\_Zones](http://www.nylovesbiz.com/Tax_and_Financial_Incentives/Empire_Zones)).

For economic development activities directed toward neighborhood revitalization and economic development, **New York State's Office of Community Renewal** may also be an important partner ([www.nysocr.org](http://www.nysocr.org)). The Office administers the Community Development Block Grant Program for the State of New York which provides grants to eligible cities, towns, and villages with a population under 50,000 and to counties with an area population under 200,000 in order to revitalize neighborhoods, expand affordable housing and economic opportunities, and/or improve community facilities and services.

**Department of Transportation (DOT)** can provide assistance related to promoting economic growth by planning, coordinating, and implementing strategies to improve the State's transportation network ([www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/policy-and-strategy](http://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/policy-and-strategy)). The Environmental Analysis Bureau of DOT works in partnership with regional environmental personnel to promote safe, effective, balanced, and environmentally sound transportation services ([www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/engineering/environmental-analysis](http://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/engineering/environmental-analysis)).

The **Environmental Facilities Corporation** can provide public and private entities with assistance in complying with federal and State environmental requirements ([www.nysefc.org](http://www.nysefc.org)).

The **New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)** is a public benefit corporation created in 1975 by the New York State Legislature and provides a wide variety of funding opportunities ([www.nyserda.org/funding](http://www.nyserda.org/funding)) in support of their programs ranging from agricultural innovation, environmental protection, community revitalization, and alternative transportation. NYSEDA administers the New York Energy SmartSM Program ([www.nyserda.org/programs](http://www.nyserda.org/programs)).

The **Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR)** is responsible for the supervision, maintenance and development of affordable low and moderate income housing in New York State. DHCR has a number of capital programs with funding available for the development of affordable housing in New York State, including the Housing Trust Fund (HTF), the HOME Program, New York State Housing Finance Agency (HFA), Homes for Working Families (HWF), Senior Housing Initiative (SHI), Housing Development Funds (HDF), Low Income Housing Credit Program (LIHC), and HouseNY ([www.nysdhcr.gov](http://www.nysdhcr.gov)).

The **New York State Canal Corporation** ([www.nyscanals.gov/welcome](http://www.nyscanals.gov/welcome)) actively seeks individuals and businesses interested in playing a role in the economic revitalization of the NYS Canal System. The Canal Corporation created the Canal Revitalization Program to foster economic development in municipalities along the Canal, and provides information about a wide variety of State and federal grants and direct assistance programs for Canal development strategies ([www.nyscanals.gov/corporation/community.html](http://www.nyscanals.gov/corporation/community.html)).

## Federal

**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)** can provide assistance on a range of economic development and community renewal programs ([www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/index.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/index.cfm)).

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** Green Communities Program can provide assistance on sustainable community development ([www.epa.gov/greenkit](http://www.epa.gov/greenkit)).

**U.S. Department of Defense Office of Economic Adjustment** can provide assistance to communities adversely impacted by significant Defense program changes ([www.oea.gov/OEASWeb.nsf/Home?OpenForm](http://www.oea.gov/OEASWeb.nsf/Home?OpenForm)).

The **National Park Service** Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program helps communities work together to improve their special places ([www.nps.gov/phso/rtcatoolbox](http://www.nps.gov/phso/rtcatoolbox)).

**U.S. Department of Energy** Smart Communities Network can provide key planning principles as well as resources for strategies, tools, and civic participation to help your community with sustainable land use planning ([www.smartcommunities.ncat.org/landuse/luintro.shtml](http://www.smartcommunities.ncat.org/landuse/luintro.shtml)).

The **Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program (TPCB)** is a collaborative effort of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as well as various other public and private



---

organizations, to help state and local transportation staff meet complex political, social, economic, and environmental demands. The program can provide information, training, and technical assistance related to local transportation systems ([www.planning.dot.gov/default.asp](http://www.planning.dot.gov/default.asp)).

### **Abandoned sites and buildings**

#### **New York State**

If you have identified abandoned buildings in your community, the **Division of Coastal Resources'** guidebook "Opportunities Waiting to Happen: Redeveloping Abandoned Buildings and Sites to Revitalize Communities" can help you. This guidebook describes the development process, techniques and resources available to redevelop abandoned buildings. It begins with developing a vision for your building and finishes with a step-by-step guide to project implementation. Each of the sections provides guidance and lessons on how to make opportunities happen. Contact the Division of Coastal Resources at (518) 474-6000 if you would like a copy, or visit [www.nyswaterfronts.com/communities\\_guidebook\\_ab.asp](http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/communities_guidebook_ab.asp).

If your waterfront project is going to involve environmental remediation, you will want to review the **Department of Environmental Conservation's** brownfields manual. This provides assistance to municipalities and the private sector in the redevelopment of brownfield sites in New York State ([www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation\\_hudson\\_pdf/brownmanual.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation_hudson_pdf/brownmanual.pdf)).

The manual outlines State, federal, and private funding and financial incentives, as well as technical assistance and liability protection available for the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield sites. Funding is available for environmental restoration, with grant assistance covering up to 90 percent of the cost of investigating and cleaning up contamination at abandoned sites (brownfields) that are municipally owned. These properties may then be marketed by the municipality for redevelopment or used by the municipality for a variety of activities including industrial, commercial, or public use. For more information on the New York State brownfields program contact the Division of Environmental Remediation staff at (518) 402-9711. You may also want to visit the brownfields web page at: [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/brownfields.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/brownfields.html).

The Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program, administered by the **Division of Coastal Resources** in cooperation with the **Department of Environmental Conservation**, helps communities and qualified community-based organizations to complete area-wide approaches to brownfields redevelopment planning. Through the Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program, communities can address a range of problems posed by multiple brownfield sites and to establish the multi-agency and private-sector partnerships necessary to leverage assistance and investments to revitalize communities by returning idle areas back to productive use and restoring environmental quality ([www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8447.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8447.html)).

#### **Federal**

The **U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)** Brownfields Program ([www.epa.gov/brownfields](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields)) provides assistance to link environmental protection with economic and community revitalization. USEPA also participates in the Brownfields Environmental Development Initiative (BEDI) ([www.hud.gov/nofa/suprnofa/suprnofa2/bedi.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/nofa/suprnofa/suprnofa2/bedi.cfm)) in partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

#### **Historic resources**

#### **New York State**

The Historic Preservation Office of the **New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation** can help you understand the historic value of your waterfront and what you need to do to protect it ([www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/planning](http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/planning)). If your waterfront project includes a historic property, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation may be able to help with funding for protection and improvements ([www.nysparks.state.ny.us/grants](http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/grants)). Through the Environmental Protection Fund, and in some cases in partnership with federal grant programs, grant assistance is provided to municipalities (including State agencies) and nonprofit organizations. Grant assistance is available through the Historic Preservation Program for the acquisition and/or rehabilitation of properties listed on the National or State Registers of Historic Places. The Heritage Areas Program

---

provides funds for facilities, exhibits, and programs in legislatively designated Heritage Area ([www.nysparks.state.ny.us/heritage/herit\\_area.asp](http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/heritage/herit_area.asp)).

The **New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA)** is a State funding agency that can provide support for activities of nonprofit arts and cultural organizations ([www.nysca.org](http://www.nysca.org)).

### Federal

#### The **National Park Service's Heritage Preservation Services**

([www.nps.gov/history/hps](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps)) helps individuals and communities identify, evaluate, protect, and preserve historic properties for future generations. It provides a broad range of products and services, financial assistance and incentives, educational guidance, and technical information in support of this mission. If you're working with a historic building, Heritage Preservation Services will be able to help with almost every aspect of your project, from planning and evaluation to repair and rehabilitation. The National Park Service administers grant programs focused on cultural resources and historic preservation ([www.nps.gov/history/hps/hpg](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/hpg)), including the Land and Water Conservation Fund, managed in New York by the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, which is intended to create and maintain a nationwide legacy of high quality recreation areas and facilities, and stimulate non-federal investments in recreation resources ([www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf](http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf)).

The National Park Service manages the "National Heritage Area" program. These areas are places designated by the United States Congress where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. Congress has established 40 National Heritage Areas around the country in which conservation, interpretation, and other activities are managed by partnerships among federal, state, and local governments and the private sector. A "management entity" is named by Congress to coordinate the partners' voluntary actions. This management entity might be a local governmental agency, nonprofit organization, or an independent federal commission. The National Park Service provides technical assistance as well as financial assistance for a limited number of years following designation ([www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas](http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas)). Three areas have been established in New York State - the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area ([www.nps.gov/nifa](http://www.nps.gov/nifa)), the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor ([www.nps.gov/erie](http://www.nps.gov/erie)) and the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area ([www.nps.gov/hurv](http://www.nps.gov/hurv)).

The **Advisory Council on Historic Preservation** can provide assistance related to the preservation, enhancement, and productive use of our nation's historic resources ([www.achp.gov](http://www.achp.gov)).

### Scenic resources

#### New York State

The **Department of Transportation (DOT)** can provide assistance related to State Scenic Byways ([www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/programs/scenic-byways](http://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/programs/scenic-byways)).

The **Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP)** can provide assistance related to the protection of historic landscapes ([www.nysparks.state.ny.us](http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us)).

### Federal

The **U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration** can provide assistance with the federal Scenic Byways Program ([www.byways.org](http://www.byways.org)).

---

## The Natural Waterfront Flooding and erosion

### New York State

**Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)**, Division of Water, Bureau of Flood Protection and Dam Safety is the State's point-of-contact with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for shore protection, and includes the designated State Floodplain Manager ([www.dec.ny.gov/lands/311.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/311.html)). The Bureau addresses coastal storm impacts, flooding, and erosion, and manages the State's Coastal Erosion Hazard Areas and program.

The **State Emergency Management Office (SEMO)** organizes disaster response, emergency preparedness, and hazard mitigation for New York State ([www.semo.state.ny.us](http://www.semo.state.ny.us)). SEMO is the primary contact for municipalities working with FEMA. SEMO prepares the State Hazard Mitigation Plan and manages FEMA grants for local hazard mitigation plans.

### Federal

The **NOAA Coastal Services Center (CSC)** serves coastal resource managers and the state coastal programs. The mission of the CSC is to support the environmental, social, and economic well being of the coast by linking people, information, and technology ([www.csc.noaa.gov](http://www.csc.noaa.gov)). The **National Data Buoy Center** provides near-realtime wave and meteorological information from buoys located in the Atlantic Ocean, Long

Island Sound, and the Great Lakes ([www.ndbc.noaa.gov](http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov)). Additional coastal observations and forecasts can be found at: [www.nowcoast.noaa.gov](http://www.nowcoast.noaa.gov).

Information on present and future tides and currents can be found at the **National Ocean Service** website ([www.nos.noaa.gov](http://www.nos.noaa.gov)), along with other coastal information.

The **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**, part of the **Department of Homeland Security**, is a primary source of federal assistance in the event of a disaster. FEMA administers several programs to reduce hazard risk, including the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program which provides funding for preparation of State Hazard Mitigation Plans. FEMA also awards Hazard Mitigation Grants, which provide partial funding in support of projects that reduce potential future damages. FEMA also coordinates hazard mitigation loans from the Federal Small Business Administration ([www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)).

The **FEMA National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)** ([www.fema.gov/business/nfip](http://www.fema.gov/business/nfip)) enables property owners in participating communities to purchase insurance protection against losses from flooding, if a floodplain management ordinance in identified flood risk areas is adopted and enforced. FEMA has also developed the Community Rating System (CRS) ([www.fema.gov/business/nfip/crs.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/business/nfip/crs.shtm)) to correlate community standards for reducing flood risks with rates for flood insurance, and help communities reduce insurance premiums.

The **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)** has long been a source of assistance for shore protection information and project funding, and has a special interest in maintenance of federal navigation projects. The USACE can provide assistance related to shore protection, project funding, and maintenance of federal navigation projects ([www.usace.army.mil/public.html](http://www.usace.army.mil/public.html)).

The USACE, New York District, ([www.nan.usace.army.mil/index.htm](http://www.nan.usace.army.mil/index.htm)) operates gauges to monitor sea and shore conditions in the Long Island region ([www.lishore.org](http://www.lishore.org)). In addition, the USACE Coastal Hydraulics Laboratory is an excellent source for information related to coastal engineering (<http://chl.erdc.usace.army.mil>).

The USACE Detroit District maintains information and forecasts water levels in the Great Lakes ([www.lre.usace.army.mil/index.cfm?chn\\_id=1400](http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/index.cfm?chn_id=1400)) for weekly levels or for monthly levels ([www.lre.usace.army.mil/index.cfm?chn\\_id=1450](http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/index.cfm?chn_id=1450)).

Since 1995, the **Atlantic Coast of New York Monitoring Program (ACNYMP)**, a cooperative effort of the NYS DOS, USACE New York District and New York Sea Grant, has collected data on beach changes and coastal processes along the 135 mile shoreline from Coney Island to Montauk Point, to inform coastal managers, regulators, government officials and the public. (<http://dune.seagrantsunysb.edu/nycoast>).

The **International Joint Commission (IJC)** is studying options for regulating water levels on



---

the Great Lakes. A number of investigations have been completed including benefits and impacts of current regulations and potential results from several alternative plans. The IJC will present its findings for public review prior to selecting a preferred regulation plan. Information about the current status of the study can be found at: [www.losl.org/about/about-e.html](http://www.losl.org/about/about-e.html).

The **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** can provide information related to hazards reduction including dredged material management and smart growth ([www.epa.gov/owow/oceans](http://www.epa.gov/owow/oceans)).

The **USGS Coastal and Marine Geology Program**, with offices in Menlo Park/Santa Cruz, California, St. Petersburg, Florida and Woods Hole, Massachusetts, maintains a research program on issues of coastal erosion, sea level rise, and storm impacts. Information on these topics and others can be downloaded (<http://marine.usgs.gov>).

### **Water quality**

### **New York State**

**Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)** can provide assistance with conserving, improving, and protecting natural resources and the environment, and controlling water, land, and air pollution ([www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov)). Of interest to waterfront communities are the funds for protecting clean water. A variety of funds are

available for municipal wastewater treatment improvement, pollution prevention, and agricultural and non-agricultural nonpoint source abatement and control. Significant support is available to acquire open space that protects water resources, and to acquire public parklands and protect farmland. Funding is also available to help small businesses protect the environment and to address flood control for small municipalities and improve the safety of dams throughout New York ([www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/grants.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/grants.html)).

The Stormwater Phase II Program ([www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8468.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8468.html)) requires permits for stormwater discharges from municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) in urbanized areas and for construction activities that would disturb one or more acres.

The **Environmental Facilities Corporation's (EFC)** mission is to promote environmental quality by providing low-cost capital and expert technical assistance to municipalities, businesses, and State agencies for environmental projects in New York State. Its purpose is to help public and private entities comply with federal and State environmental requirements ([www.nysefc.org](http://www.nysefc.org)). EFC's primary activities are the State Revolving Funds (SRF), the Industrial Finance Program (IFP), and Technical Advisory Services (TAS). EFC also administers the NYS Clean Vessel Assistance Program to increase the availability, public awareness, and public use of pumpout stations

for marine recreational vessels ([www.nysefc.org/home/index.asp?page=21](http://www.nysefc.org/home/index.asp?page=21)).

The **Department of Transportation** funds and implements environmental benefit projects that improve water quality, restore wetlands, promote eco-tourism, protect fish and wildlife, and enhance transportation corridors through its Environmental Initiative ([www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/engineering/environmental-analysis/environmental-initiative](http://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/engineering/environmental-analysis/environmental-initiative))

### **Federal**

In 1990, Congress established a new program requiring coastal states such as New York to prepare a coastal nonpoint pollution control program to implement a series of management measures ([www.epa.gov/owow/nps/MMGI](http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/MMGI)). **United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)** can provide information on water quality programs and assistance with planning and managing watersheds, water quality, and wetlands ([www.epa.gov/water](http://www.epa.gov/water)).

### **Natural resources**

### **New York State**

The **Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)** ([www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov)) administers a wide variety of programs and activities designed to conserve, improve, and protect the State's natural resources and environment, and control water, land, and air pollution. Natural resource related activities

---

include fish and wildlife management and permit programs under the Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources ([www.dec.ny.gov/about/634.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/about/634.html)); water quality permitting and watershed planning and protection under the Division of Water ([www.dec.ny.gov/about/661.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/about/661.html)); and acquisition and management of public lands and outdoor recreation under the Division of Lands and Forests ([www.dec.ny.gov/about/650.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/about/650.html)).

The Hudson River Estuary Program is a unique regional partnership designed to protect, conserve, restore, and enhance the estuary ([www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4920.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4920.html)). The heart of the Hudson River Estuary Program is the Hudson River Estuary Action Plan ([www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5106.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5106.html)), a set of twenty commitments intended to protect and conserve the estuary's natural resources and ecosystem health, clean up pollution and other impairments, and promote public use and enjoyment of the river. Grants are available from the Environmental Protection Fund to help communities implement the action plan and protect and enhance the Hudson River Estuary.

The Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve ([www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4915.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4915.html)), established in 1982, protects four exemplary wetland sites on the estuary. Spaced along the river from the brackish Tappan Zee to tidal freshwater shallows north of the City of Hudson, these sites provide ideal settings for education and comparative research. The reserve is managed in partnership by NYS DEC, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (<http://nerrs.noaa.gov/HudsonRiver>).

The **Sea Grant Program** encourages the wise stewardship of marine resources through research, education, outreach, and technology transfer. Sea Grant can provide assistance with research, education, and outreach on coastal issues ranging from fisheries, environmental quality, coastal processes, and development. A cooperative program of SUNY Stony Brook and Cornell University, New York Sea Grant ([www.seagrant.sunysb.edu](http://www.seagrant.sunysb.edu)) has 10 offices throughout the State that work with partners "bringing science to the shore" ([www.seagrant.sunysb.edu/NYSMap](http://www.seagrant.sunysb.edu/NYSMap)).

## Federal

The **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** ([www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov)) conducts a wide array of research, mapping, and management programs related to weather, oceans ([www.noaa.gov/ocean.html](http://www.noaa.gov/ocean.html)), remote sensing, fisheries ([www.noaa.gov/fisheries.html](http://www.noaa.gov/fisheries.html)), climate, and coastal resources ([www.noaa.gov/coasts.html](http://www.noaa.gov/coasts.html)). The agency is responsible for the nation's marine and anadromous protected species ([www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr)). NOAA's Restoration Center ([www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration)) also sponsors a number of useful funding programs fostering community-based fisheries restoration.

The **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)** ([www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)) administers most of the nation's fish and wildlife management programs, including terrestrial and freshwater endangered species protection ([www.fws.gov/endangered](http://www.fws.gov/endangered)) and migratory bird management. USFWS

manages public lands and outdoor recreation ([www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov)) as part of the National Wildlife Refuge system ([www.fws.gov/refuges](http://www.fws.gov/refuges)). USFWS also offers several funding programs ([www.fws.gov/grants](http://www.fws.gov/grants)), including Coastal Wetland Conservation Grants and North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants.

The **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)** ([www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)) works to protect environmental quality through a variety of air, water, pollution, and toxics and chemicals management programs. The agency works along waterfronts primarily through its Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds ([www.epa.gov/owow](http://www.epa.gov/owow)). USEPA also administers the National Estuary Program ([www.epa.gov/owow/estuaries](http://www.epa.gov/owow/estuaries)), which includes three estuaries in New York: New York/New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program ([www.harborestuary.org](http://www.harborestuary.org)), Long Island Sound Study ([www.longislandsoundstudy.net](http://www.longislandsoundstudy.net)), and Peconic Estuary Program ([www.peconicestuary.org](http://www.peconicestuary.org)).

## The Public Waterfront Waterfront access and recreation

### New York State

If your waterfront project includes park acquisition, park development, or trail development, the **New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation** may be able to help ([www.nysparks.state.ny.us/grants](http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/grants)). Through the Environmental Protection Fund and, in some cases in partnership with federal grant programs, grant assistance is provided to municipalities (including State

---

agencies) and nonprofit organizations.

- The Parks Program can be used to acquire and/or develop parks and recreational facilities and for the protection of open space.
- The Acquisition Program for all three program areas for projects where acquisition is of more importance than development.
- The Recreational Trails Program for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation and maintenance of trails and trail-related projects.

**The Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley** provides grants to municipalities and nonprofit organizations. The projects grants program provides funding for trail planning, construction and amenities, historic landscape preservation, and regional and local partnerships as well as many other resource enhancement and economic development projects ([www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us/funding/funding.htm](http://www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us/funding/funding.htm)).

The Hudson River Valley Greenway is establishing a Hudson River Water Trail stretching from Battery Park in the Village of Waterford, Saratoga County, to Battery Park in Manhattan. The trail will provide access for kayaks, canoes, and small boats along 156 miles of the river. As part of the “Hudson River Greenway Water Trail Program” the **Greenway Communities Council** provides financial and technical assistance to site owners to help complete the Hudson River Water Trail. Launch and campsite owners located along the Hudson River and within the designated Greenway Area and who are, or

wish to become, a part of the water trail system are eligible to participate in the program. Site owners can undertake a variety of projects under this program ([www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us/commcoun/Greenway%20Community%20Grant%20Application.pdf](http://www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us/commcoun/Greenway%20Community%20Grant%20Application.pdf)).

### Federal

The **National Park Service** Land and Water Conservation Fund Program can provide funding assistance for the acquisition, development, and/or rehabilitation of outdoor park and recreation facilities. Funds are available to municipal public agencies and Indian tribal governments ([www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf](http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf)).

The National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program can provide assistance to conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways ([www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca)).

The National Park Service Federal Lands to Parks Program helps communities create new parks and recreation areas by transferring surplus federal land to State and local governments ([www.nps.gov/flp](http://www.nps.gov/flp)).

### The Working Waterfront Harbor management planning

#### New York State

The **Office of General Services (OGS)**, Real Property Management and Development, can provide assistance related to grants or other conveyances of State interests in land under water, and the construction of commercial docks,

wharves, moorings, and permanent structures in State-owned underwater lands ([www.ogs.state.ny.us/RealEstate/permits](http://www.ogs.state.ny.us/RealEstate/permits)).

The **Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)** can provide information regarding wetlands, protected species, water quality classifications, and State environmental regulations that may apply to your harbor and its existing or proposed uses ([www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov)).

The **Department of Transportation (DOT)** can provide information about transportation infrastructure, including roadways, bridges, and bicycle and pedestrian paths, ferries and public transportation, in your harbor area ([www.nysdot.gov](http://www.nysdot.gov)).

The **Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP)** can assist in identifying historic underwater sites or structures, such as shipwrecks or archaeological sites. The Division of Marine and Recreational Vehicles can provide information regarding State reimbursements for some municipal navigation law enforcement expenses. OPRHP may also be a waterfront landowner in your community, managing recreational activities and access to the harbor ([www.nysparks.state.ny.us](http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us)).

#### Federal

The **U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)** is a critical partner in harbor management with information about marine safety, security and environmental protection ([www.uscg.mil](http://www.uscg.mil)). USCG approves aids to navigation and regulatory markers such as buoys, and approves certain anchorage and mooring areas.



USCG sponsors local Harbor Safety Committees as part of the federal interagency Marine Transportation System.

The **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** can provide harbor managers with a variety of charting and navigation tools and information ([www.noaa.gov/charts.html](http://www.noaa.gov/charts.html)). NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service has information about Essential Fish Habitats, marine and anadromous protected species, and commercial and recreational fisheries in your area ([www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov)).

The **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)** can identify federally maintained navigation channels and other federal projects, such as breakwaters, and provide information and regulatory guidance on dredging and dredged material disposal, flood protection, wetlands, and waterways ([www.usace.army.mil](http://www.usace.army.mil)). New York's coastal areas and inland waterways are covered primarily by the New York District ([www.nan.usace.army.mil](http://www.nan.usace.army.mil)) and the Buffalo District ([www.lrb.usace.army.mil](http://www.lrb.usace.army.mil)).

The **U.S. Department of Interior** ([www.doi.gov](http://www.doi.gov)) includes both the **National Park Service (NPS)** ([www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)) and the **Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)** ([www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)), both providing valuable information for harbor management planning. NPS is a good source for cultural resources information ([www.nps.gov/history](http://www.nps.gov/history)). It has a submerged resources center (<http://home.nps.gov/applications/submerged>), and may own or manage a National Park, Seashore, or Monument in your harbor area. USFWS can provide endangered species consultation, habitat

assessment and restoration assistance ([www.fws.gov/habitat](http://www.fws.gov/habitat)), technical input in evaluating impacts to fish and wildlife, and may own or manage a National Wildlife Refuge in your area.

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)** can provide information on air and water quality programs and regulations related to the discharge of wastes from boats and marinas ([www.epa.gov/owow/nps/marinas.html](http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/marinas.html)), beach closures and monitoring ([www.epa.gov/waterscience/beaches](http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/beaches)), and assistance with planning and managing watersheds, water quality, and wetlands ([www.epa.gov/water](http://www.epa.gov/water)).

### **Agriculture**

#### **New York State**

The **Department of Agriculture and Markets** administers several funding programs including the New York State Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program (ANSCAP), the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Implementation Project Program, and the Farmland Viability Program ([www.agmkt.state.ny.us](http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us)).

#### **Federal**

The **U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment**, can provide assistance with rural development and help communities with natural resource concerns, such as erosion control, watershed protection, and forestry ([www.ers.usda.gov/Browse/NaturalResourcesEnvironment](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Browse/NaturalResourcesEnvironment)).



Montauk Point Lighthouse

