

INTRODUCTION

The New York State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) is designed to give waterfront communities an opportunity to assess conditions along the waterfront, establish policies to guide development, and implement appropriate waterfront land uses and projects. It is an extension of the State's Coastal Management Program that allows communities to design the program to better reflect and address local issues and opportunities in the designated local waterfront revitalization area. The LWRP establishes a planning framework for future public and private investment and development actions that occur within that area.

The Evans LWRP was originally adopted by the Town and approved by the Department of State in 1986. Since that time, and with the 1999 adoption of the Town's Comprehensive Plan, the importance of updating and improving the LWRP to better reflect current trends, conditions and shoreline characteristics has grown. The Town of Evans considers the waterfront to be among its most important recreational, aesthetic and economic resources. Therefore, the LWRP is being amended to focus on restoring and protecting important environmental and cultural resources, promoting development and redevelopment to revitalize deteriorated and underutilized areas of the waterfront, and enhancing tourism and associated economic development that will meet the Town's goals and objectives for the waterfront.

The Town of Evans is located on the shore of Lake Erie, in the southwest portion of Erie County, New York. The Town encompasses approximately 47 square miles in land area and is generally rural in character. It is situated south of the Town of Hamburg (Erie County), west of the Town of Eden and north of the Town of Brant. The Town contains approximately 12 miles of shoreline along Lake Erie. Within the western New York region, Evans is situated approximately 30 miles south of the Buffalo metropolitan area. The first known settler in Evans was Joel Harvey, who built a house near the mouth of Eighteen-Mile Creek in 1804. Incorporated in 1821, the Town celebrated the 175th anniversary of that event in 1996.

Lake Erie is the centerpiece of the Town's waterfront. The lake provides ample opportunity for boating, fishing, swimming and sunbathing, beach combing and other passive recreational activities that all add to the attraction of the Town's shoreline. Lake waters are well known by local fishermen for the variety and abundance of sport fish. Sturgeon Point Marina is a focal point of the area for boating access to the lake. It is the only marina or source of dockage between the City of Buffalo to the north and Cattaraugus Creek / Sunset Bay to the south.

The Evans lake shore has long been popular as a summer recreation area, with numerous cottages, camps, parks and religious retreats. Over the past few decades, the area has become increasingly attractive for year-round suburban residences, as well as summer homes. The area also includes a variety of recreational amenities. Evangola State Park, Wendt Beach and Bennett Beach County Parks, and Sturgeon Point Marina function as regional recreational attractions. The Evans Town Park, Lake Erie Beach Park and Eighteen-Mile Creek also provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to the area. The strong sense of community pride along the waterfront is supported by seasonal events that are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

This LWRP includes an outline of proposed changes to the boundary of the local waterfront revitalization area, which was originally established in 1986. Section II includes an updated inventory and analysis of existing conditions and resources in the waterfront area. The policies contained in Section III of this LWRP support the inventory and are focused on waterfront revitalization, making beneficial use of waterfront lands, enhancing tourism and protecting community character and important natural and cultural resources. The policies are further supported by land and water use and implementation proposals outlined in Sections IV and V.

Together, the information contained in the LWRP comprises a program that sets the direction for revitalizing Evan’s waterfront into the future.

