

IV. PROPOSED LAND AND WATER USES AND PROPOSED PROJECTS

This section of the LWRP describes the proposed land and water uses for the Town of Evans waterfront area. Proposed projects are also briefly described in this section. The Proposed Land Use and Projects maps, illustrates the proposed land use patterns and identifies the location of proposed projects within the LWRP area.

4.1 PROPOSED LAND USES

Land uses in the Evans LWRA are proposed in a manner that will continue the general patterns of existing development in each sub-area. Land use changes are proposed to protect waterfront resources, maintain the existing character of the community, and properly accommodate future development. In addition, the proposed land uses take into account the vision set forth in the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The generalized land use recommendations and the proposed projects shown on Maps [8A](#), [8B](#), and [8C](#) are intended to support the Coastal Management Policies contained in Section III.

Recommendations have been included to improve opportunities for public access, whether this means making improvements at existing parks or providing new opportunities for shoreline access. Emphasis is also placed on connecting existing parks and other waterfront facilities through a continuous trail system that would help to improve public access along the shoreline. The waterfront trail system would also link the Town with existing and proposed trails in adjoining communities. The objective is to allow the Evans waterfront to be a viable segment in a regional railway system. The Town long range goal for the waterfront is to make necessary improvements for residents to maintain and improve the quality of life, strengthen recreational uses to enhance public access and use of the waterfront, and revitalize certain areas to bring about economic development in support of tourism.

SUB-AREA 1

Sub-Area 1 is primarily comprised of rural residential uses and residential estates that are situated atop the steep bluffs that extend along the shoreline. The stretch along Eighteen-Mile Creek, although residential in nature, with steep topography, offers two good locations for recreational fishing access to the creek. The land uses in this area are not proposed for change, with the exception of the anticipation of some of the currently vacant lands being developed with additional residential uses.

There is a large property known as the Columban Center that is centrally located in this area. This property is currently used as a private religious retreat by the Catholic Diocese. In the future,

should this property cease to be owned by the Diocese, it provides an excellent location for a private conference center or private lodging (tourism oriented usage). There are very few locations for tourism-related use in Sub-Area 1, which is primarily residential, aside from Graycliff and the Sturgeon Point Marina. Furthermore, as there are no uses of this nature along the waterfront (or in the Town), it could help to enhance tourism and provide an alternative source of lodging in the Highland Derby area. Private commercial use would also put this land back on the Town's tax roll, helping to balance the tax base.

The lands immediately upland of the Sturgeon Point Marina are currently vacant and undeveloped. These lands are proposed for passive recreational use. The Town is in the process of acquiring this property from Erie County and it is their intention to develop the area with passive recreational uses as an extension of, and enhancement to, the marina property. A large part of this area would be protected, as it contains a large area of State-designated freshwater wetlands. However, the area that remains for public use would offer picnic area, scenic viewing from the top of the bluff behind the marina and additional parking for the marina.

SUB-AREA 2

Sub-Area 2 contains a large extent of residential development, mixed with public and private recreational uses and a few public service facilities. There are also some isolated agricultural properties situated south of Larkin Road, in the northern portion of Sub-Area 2. Land use changes proposed for Sub-Area 2 include the expected development of certain vacant lands with residential uses. At present, there is no indication that the use of the agricultural lands will change. Aside from the following, no other significant changes are proposed for Sub-Area 2.

The Town is in the process of acquiring a large area of vacant land from Erie County, which is situated southeast of the Sturgeon Point Marina, off Sturgeon Point Road. This land has the potential for either passive recreation or other Town-related uses in association with the Sturgeon Point Marina.

The Sturgeon Point facility also has the potential for increased and better use. The potential exists to accommodate additional commercial uses on the upland portion of the marina site to improve public service, as well as generate greater income that could be reinvested in the property. This area could be improved as a multi-use recreational facility, including the expansion of the marina and use of adjacent lands.

In addition, the vacant property located at the terminus of Wendt Beach Road will be improved for recreational use. This land formerly provided public access for boat launching. The Town intends to make some minor improvements in this area to re-establish its use for public access and the launching of small, non-motorized vessels.

The former Angola Water Treatment Plant is situated directly south of Bennett Beach County Park. This site contains the abandoned Village of Angola Water Treatment Plant that once provided drinking water to the Town of Evans and Village of Angola. Since ceasing operations in the mid

1990's, this facility has remained vacant and unutilized. This property is located on the waterfront and offers opportunities for improved public access, tourism and economic development.

Finally, the Purvis Landing site is a narrow area of vacant land that provides access to Lake Erie. This former boat launch is underutilized and has the potential for improve use. Although it does not provide ample room for public parking, it does offer opportunities for greater use by local residents and those who utilize the proposed multi-use pathway through the provision of on-site enhancements and amenities.

SUB-AREA 3

Similar to Sub-Areas 1 and 2, Sub-Area 3 is predominantly residential in nature. There are also some public and private recreational uses and some larger agricultural uses to the southeast. Aside from the transition of some small vacant parcels to residential use, no significant changes are planned for this area; the agricultural properties are expected to remain in use and the private recreational uses will continue.

The exception to this is the Lake Erie Beach area. The Town would like to see the Lake Erie Beach area become a more prominent and prosperous location along the waterfront. It currently offers a blend of recreational, commercial and residential uses, but is not all that it could be. The area suffers from residential blight and a lack of investment. Revitalization of, and additional commercial uses and improvements to, the nearby residential districts could help to bring about needed economic development activity for this area to achieve this goal. The revitalization of the Lake Erie Beach neighborhood could encourage increased tourism and improve the quality of life for local residents, as well. Commercial and residential revitalization would also enhance the use of Lake Erie Beach Park.

4.2 PROPOSED WATER USES/HARBOR MANAGEMENT

For reasons specified as follows, the Evans LWRP does not constitute a Harbor Management Plan pursuant to Section 922 of Article 42 of the Executive Law or the regulations promulgated in accordance with this law. Recreational boating and fishing is the primary water use along the Evans shoreline and is supported by the Sturgeon Point Marina. As described in the Inventory and Analysis (Section II), due to shoreline conditions, this is the only suitable and economically feasible location for a marina in the Town.

There are no other permanent docking facilities in the LWRA. There are no designated channels or other navigational infrastructure in the area, other than the entry channel to the marina basin. Aside from the navigational lights at the entrance channel to the harbor, temporary buoys that delineate designated swimming areas at Evans Town Park and Lake Erie Beach Town Park, are the only other navigational devices along the waterfront or in the open waters of Lake Erie. Dredging along the waterfront is

undertaken to maintain marina access and remedy shoreline flooding and erosion issues (maintenance) at the mouths of certain creeks.

The lack of boating infrastructure severely limits access to Lake Erie for recreational boating activities in the area, especially for Town residents that do not own waterfront properties. The boat ramp at the Sturgeon Point Marina is the only public facility along the entire waterfront that provides access opportunities for recreational boating on a seasonal basis. There is one private launch ramp at Point Breeze RV Resort that offers more restricted access. Furthermore, not all of the Town or County parks offer easy boating access for small craft (the beach clubs in Sub-Area 2 also offer limited access). However, the many waterfront parks do offer recreational access for swimming and other passive uses.

Plans for improving surface water use along the Evans shoreline include improving the terminus of Wendt Beach Road to allow for the launching of small, non-motorized vessels, as well as long-term improvements to enlarge the Sturgeon Point Marina. There are no plans for additional marina development or the creation of other harbor management infrastructure in the Evans waterfront area.

4.3 PROPOSED TOWN PROJECTS AND STUDIES

There are a number of projects proposed along the Town of Evans waterfront to improve opportunities for public access and recreation. As noted in the previous discussion, much of the shoreline is developed with private residential uses, limiting the potential for the general public (particularly residents living in inland areas of the Town) to enjoy the waterfront. However, Evans does benefit by having a number of public park facilities that offer water-related recreational opportunities for Town residents and others.

While there are a few water-enhanced uses along the waterfront in the form of bars and restaurants, the Sturgeon Point Marina (in Sub-Area 1) is the only true water-dependent public recreational use along the lakeshore. A key focus of the Town's waterfront revitalization strategy is to take advantage of the recreational tourism potential of the Evans waterfront. To this end, projects proposed for the area are (and should be) oriented around improving and increasing the public's ability to access and utilize local surface waters and providing additional or enhanced recreational amenities along the waterfront.

Another significant issue that needs to be addressed in the waterfront area is flooding. Although there are locations that may be subject to minor localized flooding, there are two specific locations that experience more serious and on-going seasonal flooding - - Big Sister Creek at NYS Route 5 and Fern Brook, near the Evans Town Park. Improvements are required to address impacts in both of these areas.

Projects proposed along the Town of Evans waterfront include the following.

STURGEON POINT BLUFFS AND MARINA IMPROVEMENTS

As previously discussed, the upland area behind the Sturgeon Point Marina is proposed for passive recreational improvements. For a number of years, the Town has been working to acquire an approximately 21-acre area from Erie County (north of Sturgeon Point Road, upland of the marina).

The Town planned to redevelop these lands with passive recreational amenities that would complement the marina.

The results of environmental studies have indicated the existence of large areas of wetlands in this area, which has forced the Town to scale back on plans for the redevelopment of this land. Initially, plans included such things as a campground, an outdoor amphitheater, sledding hill, a series of interpretive and recreational trails and additional parking for the marina with connecting roadways. Current plans include an overlook at the top of the bluff for scenic viewing, an area for picnicking and passive recreation, and expanded parking area for the marina. The Town will continue to work toward achieving this project.

The Town is also in the process of acquiring approximately 31.75 acres of vacant land from Erie County, which is situated southeast of the Sturgeon Point Marina, south of Sturgeon Point Road. At present, it is anticipated that this land would be used for either passive recreation or another Town-related use in association with the Sturgeon Point Marina. Final end use has not been determined at this time, but should be evaluated in conjunction with improved use of the marina facility.

The Sturgeon Point facility, itself, also has the potential for increased and better use. The Sturgeon Point Advisory Committee prepared a report in 2006 recommending the expansion of the marina to accommodate more, and larger, vessels. Marina expansion would allow the Town to offer more recreational fishing opportunities, enhance tourism in the Sturgeon Point and Highland Derby areas and become a more prominent participant in the recreational use of Lake Erie.

Upland usage at the marina should also be evaluated to determine if additional commercial uses could be accommodated on this site to improve public service, as well as generate greater income for the Town that could be reinvested in the property and on-site property improvements. The Town should study the potential to improve and revitalize the Sturgeon Point Marina as a multi-use recreational facility, including the expansion of the marina and use of adjacent lands.

EVANS (LAKE SHORE ROAD) MULTI-USE TRAIL

The Town of Evans has been working for years on the development of a multi-use pathway that would extend from the northern boundary of the Town, along Lake Shore Road, to the southern boundary with the Town of Brant. To date, the Town has secured funding for the first two phases of this project. However, the intent is to complete the trail in an effort to connect all local parks and waterfront resources and link the Town with adjoining municipalities as part of the regional trail system.

The Town desires to secure funding for the completion of the final phases, completing the connection between Sturgeon Point Road and the Marina with Eighteen-Mile Creek and the Town of Hamburg. The southern-most section, from Lake Erie Beach to Evangola State Park and the Town of Brant also needs to be designed and built. The completion of these two final phases would

enable the Town to achieve its goal of creating a full and beneficial trail system along the length of the waterfront.

Seaway Trail – Lake Shore Road



Tunnel at Evans Town Park



LAKE ERIE BEACH PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Lake Erie Beach Park provides a backdrop for the Lake Erie Beach commercial district. This park was developed with funding secured with the State’s Environmental Protection Fund. Therefore, unlike the other Town parks that are restricted for use by Town residents, this park it is open to the general public. As such, it is more widely utilized than other Town parks and requires a higher degree of maintenance.

Parking area at Lake Erie Beach Park



The Town wishes to improve regulatory signage to help enforce use restrictions in an effort to cut back on maintenance requirements. The Town would also like to relocate the basketball court to a better location for improved use. This would also allow for improved parking. Furthermore, as the park was improved for handicapped accessibility, the Town would like to make improvements of this nature to provide fishing access to Muddy Creek. The construction of a handicapped accessible fishing platform along the creek would open up a wider area of the park to the disabled.

WENDT ROAD TERMINUS

The end of Wendt Road was formerly used as a boat launching facility. Over the years, it has become deteriorated and no longer offers the boat launching opportunities it once did. The Town would like to see this area improved to once again serve the public need for a location for launching small craft. Although the Sturgeon Point Marina provides facilities for recreational boating, it caters to larger, motorized vessels. The public has expressed the need for a location for smaller vessels, such as canoes, row boats, etc., and the terminus of Wendt Road would fill this need. There is

sufficient room to create a small parking area; outdoor lighting still exists at the site. Additional clean up and some site restructuring would be required to improve the site for greater public use.

Wendt Road Terminus



PURVIS LANDING

Purvis Landing is a 0.25-acre parcel located at the southern end of Sub-Area 2. At present it is a grassed area with a sidewalk that offers public access to the shoreline, beach, and excellent views of Lake Erie. It is also located along the path of the Evans Multi-Use Trail, which was recently funded and is in the design stages. This property measures 50 feet wide and 192 feet deep, which limits the extent of public use. Hence, the site is presently underutilized.

As this former boat launch site has the potential to offer greater opportunities to the public, the Town desires to improve this property with benches, picnic tables, a gazebo, and landscaping (trees and shrubs). The Town also intends to make the site more handicapped accessible through the construction of a boardwalk structure that would tie the upland with the beach. As a part of this effort, debris at the site and along the beach (from the former boat launch) would also be removed, improving public safety and overall accessibility. Improvements to this site will enhance opportunities for public access to the shoreline, add another stop for passive recreation along the multi-use trail and Seaway Trail, and benefit the local community.

The site offers opportunities for canoeing or kayaking, but parking is an issue. Use of the existing public parking spaces was thwarted by the nearby residents, leading the Town to remove these

existing parking spaces. The Town needs to investigate the potential to acquire land on the east side of Lake Shore Road for future parking to improve beach access for these uses.

Purvis Landing



LAKE ERIE BEACH REVITALIZATION

As noted in the Inventory and Analysis, the Lake Erie Beach area of the Town includes a diverse residential neighborhood and a small commercial district that adjoins the park. This area is experiencing a number of issues including dilapidated housing and housing vacancies, Building Code violations, substandard roadway infrastructure, limited employment opportunities, crime and limited commercial goods and services. To address these concerns, the Town has authorized a study of the area to develop a comprehensive revitalization strategy. This study defined the neighborhood boundary, evaluated land use and neighborhood demographics, assessed economic needs and outlined key strategies and resources for the area. It involved an in-depth analysis of housing conditions, infrastructure, the economic marketplace, residential and commercial opportunities and Code enforcement efforts.

The goal of the Lake Erie Beach Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy, which was completed in September 2010, was to develop a Neighborhood Action Plan to address local issues and realize an improved hamlet area. The major elements of the Action Plan include goals and objectives, Code enforcement recommendations, strategic policies and future concepts, a future land use plan, key project recommendations and an implementation program that includes funding strategies. The

overall goal was to develop a program for strengthening the quality of life for residents and achieving a brighter economic future for the Lake Erie Beach hamlet area.

Lake Erie Beach business district



Key project recommendations and innovative strategies in this plan include (see C, which contains the Neighborhood Action Plan):

- Completing a multi-modal circulation network
- Upgrading utility infrastructure to standards
- Establishing a new model for residential housing,
- Creating a Lake Erie Beach Local Development Corporation,
- Create housing rehabilitation tax abatements,
- Leverage public property,
- Employ stormwater management,
- Update the zoning code, and
- Properly enforce the Housing Code and local land use laws comprehensively.

The commercial area of the Lake Erie Beach hamlet has the potential for the development of additional commercial facilities. One vision for this area, which is identified in the Plan, is to create a Lake Erie Beach marketplace and visitor’s center for tourism activity. This would follow the example set in the City of Dunkirk to achieve improvements in this area that could boost tourism and provide greater commercial and water-related opportunities for residents and visitors to the Town. The biggest challenge is securing the funding to establish the foundation for this project. The Plan, which is included in Appendix C, recommends that this project be something that would be overseen by the proposed Lake Erie Beach Local Development Corporation.

FERN BROOK FLOOD IMPROVEMENTS

Fern Brook is another area of the Town that historically experiences annual flooding events. There was a project that was started in this area to remedy flood impacts that needs to be finished to fully mitigate the problems that occur here. In particular, the area between Waterman Road and the Evans Town Park needs to be dredged and re-banked to remedy flooding that occurs in the Town Park and adjacent area. Fern Brook flows through the Town Park and outlets to Lake Erie on the Town's beach. The outlet needs to be extended to include the portion of Fern Brook that extends from the Golf Course in the Waterman Road area. Improvements in this area could include the creation of a public trail along the creek that would connect into the Town Park.

Fern Brook



BEACH CLEANUP

Each year the Town spends extensive time and effort to clean the beach at the end of each winter season. This involves the collection and removal of large volumes of debris that is dumped on local beaches by winter storms. The Parks Department would like to streamline the beach cleanup process and also develop a better way to remove and dispose of beach debris. This would involve the creation of a Town-wide composting facility.

The Town should also develop a Town-wide Post Storm Response Strategy to address:

- organic materials and other debris that collects along the Evans shoreline and at Town beaches;

- debris that accumulates along residential and commercial streets;
- debris that is conveyed by stormwater, ditches, culverts and paved surfaces;
- any other areas where debris is known to accumulate or be deposited during storm events.

This response strategy should include how storm debris would be collected and properly disposed of, and who would be responsible for coordinating the efforts and covering the costs. Efforts might include community/neighborhood volunteer group actions, depending on the volume, size and type of waste debris that requires removal (hazardous materials would need to be handled properly). Such an effort could be coordinated with the volunteers who currently conduct the Great Lakes Beach Sweep at the end of each summer season to pick up trash and other such debris.

Storm debris along beach

