

SECTION 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 Hamburg waterfront area. Proposed projects are briefly described. The Proposed Land Use and Projects map, 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 Hamburg LWRA are proposed in a manner that will continue the general patterns of existing development in the study 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 Open Space and Recreation Plan and the Town of Hamburg 2010 Comprehensive Plan.

Recommendations have been included to provide a continuous connection of multi-use trails to improve public access along the shoreline and to link the Town with existing and proposed trails in adjoining communities. The objective is to allow the Hamburg waterfront to be a viable segment in a regional trail system. 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.

Sub-Area 1

Where not already in residential or commercial use today, land uses along the waterfront in Sub-Area 1 should serve the recreation and open space needs of the community. Proposed land use changes in Sub-Area 1 include accommodating reuse and redevelopment of former commercial and industrial properties.

The Buffalo Crushed Stone parcel (on the former Bethlehem Steel property) at the northern boundary of the LWRP area is abandoned but there are issues of environmental contamination and site access that have stymied the potential redevelopment of this property. Buffalo Crushed Stone and the Bethlehem Steel complex were identified in the original 1987 LWRP as a proposed water-oriented mixed use area, which could include a marina, restaurants, offices and lakeside housing. The Town also sees this site as a potential location for wind energy development or light industry. The primary objective is to get the property back in use; therefore, a suitable plan for either commercial or light industrial development would be acceptable for the future use of this area. Subsequent to the 1987 LWRP, Bethlehem Steel Corporation prepared a Land Redevelopment Plan for approximately 1,150 acres of their holdings in the Lackawanna area. Within the Hamburg LWRA, the plan called for a marina that would be the southern anchor for a larger 485-acre greenway and recreation area. The development of Woodlawn Beach State Park has met some of those earlier recommendations. The Town will continue to work with the owners of the property to devise a plan for the effective reuse of this site.

The Woodlawn area should remain primarily residential with supportive commercial along Lakeshore Road (NYS Route 5). It is recommended that, where zoning requirements can be met, parcels on the interior streets in Woodlawn be developed with in-fill residential uses. Vacant and under-utilized parcels along Lakeshore Road, in between First Street and Seventh Street, should be developed with neighborhood commercial uses. Within the same general area, no major land use changes are anticipated related to the Woodlawn Beach State Park, the Gateway office complex or the Erie County Southtowns Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Snyder Tank facility should be redeveloped with use(s) that are more compatible with the surrounding area. This waterfront site should be revitalized with water-dependent or water-enhanced marine-commercial or entertainment uses to improve and promote public access and recreational tourism, and to help foster additional revitalization efforts in the area.

Other former Bethlehem Steel Corporation properties, which consist of vacant green space on the east side of Lakeshore Road at Bayview Road, comprise the Lake Erie Industrial Park. At this time, only one facility (credit union) has been developed here. The proposed land use for this area should remain business commercial - light Industrial.

A small grouping of homes along Hoover Road, east of Bayview Road should remain residential. While immediately (and currently) surrounded by non-residential uses, including the Snyder Tank facility, they are only separated from the Hoover Beach residential neighborhood by the Dock of the Bay restaurant. In recent years these residential properties were re-zoned from industrial to neighborhood commercial (NC). Under the NC classification, residential uses are permitted. In the NC District commercial uses preferably are established utilizing existing residential structures. This allows for more appropriate commercial activity serving neighborhood residential needs without significantly altering the character of the neighborhood.

From Hoover Beach south, moving into Sub-Area 2, the remainder the waterfront will remain primarily in residential use. There will be some exceptions in the area around Athol Springs, the Town Park and Wanakah, where water-related commercial and parks/recreation uses are mixed in. The Town is planning on developing a gateway in the Athol Springs area, just south of where Hoover Road intersects with NYS Route 5. This amenity would include appropriate signage, landscaping, passive park improvements (benches and picnic tables), a small overlook as part of the parking lot for Hoak's Restaurant (which is part of the NYS roadway right-of-way), and a clock tower.

The mix of uses in the Athol Springs area should continue as water-enhanced commercial, receiving priority over non- water enhanced uses along the waterfront, west of Lakeshore Road. Several elements of the Town's 1992 Athol Springs Waterfront Revitalization Plan still remain appropriate to include in this LWRP update. Relevant land use changes called for in that plan included commercial uses in the areas surrounding Big Tree Road and Lakeshore Road (NYS Route 5). Per that plan, the Town has established a Town park (Hoover Beach Trail Head Park) on the site of the former Town Sewage Treatment Plant.

The Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan also identified a number of sites as "Areas of Visual Significance". As noted in other section of the LWRP, the Town benefits from spectacular sunsets over Lake Erie, that can only be enjoyed from a few public sites or private residences along the Lake. The

development of a scenic viewing area in Athol Springs will provide opportunities for public enjoyment of view of the lake.

In general, the industrial uses in Sub-Area 1 west of Lake Shore Road should be phased out and guided towards neighborhood commercial or waterfront related commercial uses in support of subpolicy 1.1. This policy calls for the redevelopment of underutilized areas in order to strengthen the traditional waterfront focus. The underutilized industrial sites in Sub-area 1 could be revitalized with marine-commercial or marine-related recreational uses to improve and promote public access and recreational tourism, and to help foster additional revitalization efforts in the area. Industrial uses are more appropriately located east of Lakeshore Road, in areas already designated for such use.

Sub-Area 2

There are few land use changes proposed for Sub-Area 2. The area is, and should remain, primarily residential in nature. Local business districts should remain and be strengthened to provide continued service to surrounding neighborhoods. Along the Lakeshore, new non-residential uses should be water-enhanced commercial uses focused on tourist, recreation and entertainment businesses. Two key non-residential features that will remain in the Sub-Area are the Town Park, along the lakeshore and the Seaway Trail Visitor's Center. The 135-acre Wanakah Country Club represents a significantly large commercial recreation use within Sub-Area 2 that is not anticipated to change.

Sub-Area 3

Sub-Area 3 is geographically located within the larger land use area identified in the Town's Comprehensive Plan as "Lakeview". Sub-Area 3 contains a number of larger residential properties and estate lots. Similar to Sub-Area 2, the predominantly residential waterfront area in Lakeview is anticipated to remain that way. Although there are no major land use changes proposed, there are at least two large undeveloped parcels in the western section of Sub-Area 3, south of Old Lake Shore Road, that are in the preliminary stages of residential development. The Tree Haven residential project is currently under development with townhouses and single-family homes on approximately 60 acres. Although only in the initial sketch plan phase, a 20-acre property on the north side of Schoellkopf Road at Eckhardt Road is also proposed for residential subdivision. The potential subdivision development of remaining undeveloped residential properties, including the large undeveloped site situated at the southerly boundary of Sub-Area 3, should continue to be regulated through the Town's Lakeview Overlay District, which encourages clustering to protect significant natural features (wetlands, woodcuts), avoids road frontage lots, and restricts sewer district extensions. This style of development would allow for the connection of valuable habitat and open space, and provide the rural character of this area. It is anticipated that other existing vacant residential lots that meet existing zoning may eventually be proposed for denser residential development.

4.2 Proposed Water Uses/Harbor Management

Recreational boating is the primary water use along the Hamburg shoreline. However, as previously described in the Inventory and Analysis (Section II), due to shoreline conditions, there are no marinas or permanent docking facilities in the LWRA. Nor are there any designated channels or other navigational

infrastructure in the area. This severely limits access for recreational boating activities in the area, especially for Town residents that do not own waterfront properties. The boat ramp in the Town Park is the only facility along the entire waterfront that provides access opportunities for recreational boating on a seasonal basis.

4.3 Proposed Projects

There are a number of projects proposed along the Town of Hamburg 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 public to enjoy the waterfront.

While there are water-enhanced uses along the waterfront in the form of parks and restaurants, there are few existing water-dependent recreational uses along the lakeshore. A key focus of the Town's waterfront revitalization strategy is to take advantage of the recreational tourism potential of the Hamburg waterfront. To this end, projects proposed for the area should be oriented around improving and increasing the public's ability to access and utilize local surface waters and providing additional recreational amenities along the waterfront. Projects proposed along the Town of Hamburg waterfront include the following.

WOODLAWN GATEWAY

The NYS Route 5/Lake Shore Road corridor through Woodlawn is a significant gateway into the Town of Hamburg from Lackawanna and City of Buffalo to the north. Aesthetic and directional improvements should be made to create more welcoming impression to the Town. An entrance feature should not only announce arrival in Hamburg but also into Woodlawn and the Hamburg waterfront communities. This can be accomplished by signage, landscaping, architectural improvements and establishment of key businesses that relate more to the nearby waterfront neighborhood than to the heavy industry in the immediate vicinity. This project is supported by the New York State Department of Transportation, as well as the Town.

ATHOL SPRINGS GATEWAY

The project involves the construction a gateway feature in the Athol Springs area, just south of where Hoover Road intersects with NYS Route 5, adjacent to the Hoak's Restaurant site. This amenity would include signage to identify the area and welcome visitors, landscaping, passive park improvements (benches and picnic tables), a small overlook as part of the parking lot for Hoak's Restaurant (which is part of the NYS roadway right-of-way), and a clock tower.

NYS ROUTE 5 RECONSTRUCTION AND MULTI-USE TRAIL

The New York State Department of Transportation is in the design phase for a reconstruction project for Lake Shore Road (NYS Route 5), between Big Tree Road to the east and Old Lake Shore Road to the west. The project will include a traffic calming study to determine appropriate measures for managing the volume of traffic that utilizes this roadway and protecting the character of surrounding development.

Currently, the NYS DOT does not anticipate constructing any improvements before 2009. A project objective supports the recreational goal of providing increased public access to the shoreline and linking waterfront attractions. It also enhances the use of the New York State Seaway Trail (Route 5 is a designated segment) and would provide a public access connection to the Seaway Trail Visitor's Center. It is not known at this time what alternative plan will be chosen as a mean of achieving the State's goal for Route 5. However, the alternative that is ultimately chosen should include provisions for a multi-use pathway along the entire stretch of the study area.

TOWN PARK IMPROVEMENTS

There has been a stated need for a marina facility in the Town of Hamburg. One potential location is at the Town Park. The 2010 Comprehensive Plan notes that future phases of the jetty project included: "future development of a break wall (creating a protected harbor), fishing docks and a marina for 200 boat slips". Recent improvements to the Town Park have included parking and a fishing pier. However, marina improvements for recreational boating would require significant funding and such a project is not anticipated to be in any immediate plans. Nonetheless, a project of this nature should be evaluated for long-term potential.

MT. VERNON PARK IMPROVEMENTS

There is a small parcel of Town-owned property along Lake Shore Road, at Mt. Vernon Blvd., that should be improved for public use. This site currently provides lawn and trees and a few picnic tables for public use. Situated at the top of the bluff, overlooking the lake, this property offers views of Lake Erie and would be a logical stop along the proposed multi-use trail through this area. Parking is a constraint along this busy section of Route 5, but improved access and parking, including a crosswalk, should be investigated to enable greater public use of this site.

SEAWAY TRAIL VISITORS CENTER

PHASE II and III Improvements

The development of the Seaway Trail Visitors Center at the former Wanakah Water Works facility was completed. This renovation project was commenced in 2003, and included three phases. These involved renovation of the building as the visitor's center, road level site improvements for public benefit, and improving the beach and rear sections for the building for public access. The Phase III improvements, which have not received funding, include the continued outside renovation of the site for public access, including the development of public docking and/or fishing facilities along Lake Erie, development of the viewing terraces behind the building and the provision of increased public exhibit space inside the building. The Town should continue to pursue funding to complete all phases of this project.

LAKE SHORE ROAD MULTI-USE TRAIL

The Town should develop a multi-use trail along Old Lake Shore Road, from its convergence with NYS Route 5 to the Town boundary with the Town of Evans. This pathway would provide a link with the Evans trail system and provide the last segment in the Town of Hamburg's proposed trail system. Lake Shore Road and Route 5 are designated segments of the New York State Seaway Trail, which is a

designated National Scenic By Way. A present, the public has no means of enjoying this stretch of roadway and deriving pleasure from the scenic views of the Lake, as well as the sunsets.

EIGHTEEN-MILE CREEK ACCESS

The Town should investigate the possibility of acquiring land along the Town boundary, at Eighteen-Mile Creek, to provide public access to the creek. The area in the vicinity of the existing 1812 cemetery would be a logical location for a small parking area and the development of more formalized access to the creek. The potential for land acquisition to develop such access should be examined further.